

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

SENT TO D.C.

3-2806

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Bohemian National Cemetery**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **Roughly bounded by Foster Avenue(south), Pulaski Road
(west), Bryn Mawr Avenue (north) and the approximate line of
Central Park Avenue (east)** _____ Not for publication

city or town **Chicago** _____ vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **Cook** code **031** zip code **60630**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally _____ statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Walter L. Chmura 1514P0
Signature of certifying official

3-28-06
Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

American Indian Tribe

Bohemian National Cemetery

Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the

National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the

National Register

☐ removed from the National Register☐ other (explain):**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private☐ public-local☐ public-State☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☐ building(s)☒ district☐ site☐ structure☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

 buildings sites structures objects TotalNumber of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **N/A**

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Bohemian National Cemetery
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/cemetery
Funerary/mortuary

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/cemetery
Funerary/mortuary

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Renaissance Revival
Classical Revival
Beaux Arts
Gothic Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **Stone**

Roof **Slate**

Walls **Stone**

Other **Metal**

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets

Bohemian National Cemetery
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **X** **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **X** **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☒ **X** **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage

Architecture

Art

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance **1877-1956** Significant Dates **1877, 1878, 1903, 1906, 1919, 1933**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation **European/Czech-American**

Architect/Builder **N/A**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See Continuation Sheet**

Bohemian National Cemetery
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9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Name of repository **Bohemian National Cemetery**

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property **126 acres**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 _____ 3 _____

2 _____ 4 _____

☒ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See Continuation Sheet

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

See Continuation Sheet

Bohemian National Cemetery

Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois

County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **William B. Sieger**organization **Department of Art, Northeastern Illinois University**date **October 2005**street & number **5500 North St. Louis Avenue**telephone **773-442-4942**city or town **Chicago** state **Illinois** zip code **60625-4699**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Bohemian National Cemetery Association**street & number **5255 North Pulaski Road**telephone **773-539-8442**city or town **Chicago** state **Illinois** zip code **60630**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Bohemian National Cemetery
Cook County, Illinois

Description of the Property

Located at 5255 North Pulaski Road on the northwest side of Chicago (formerly the village of Jefferson Park) Bohemian National Cemetery currently covers approximately 126 acres in an "L"-shaped site bounded by Foster Avenue on the south, Pulaski Road on the west, Bryn Mawr Avenue on the north, and the approximate line of Central Park Avenue on the east (See the cemetery map, Figure 1). As of 1977, this included eighty acres of lots, twenty acres of roads, nine and one-half acres of single graves, nine acres occupied by buildings, and seven and one-half acres of undivided property. In 2004, a crescent-shaped sliver of land to the south of a small bend in the Chicago River that cuts across the southwestern corner of the site was sold to the city of Chicago for development as a public park. The Bohemian National Cemetery consists of 64 resources--one contributing site that includes roadways, open space and landscaping, a lagoon, and grave markers; seven contributing buildings; one non-contributing building; and fifty-six contributing structures.

The Landscape

Predominantly flat, the land was originally a semi-wooded area of orchards and pastures. According to the history published by the cemetery association, many trees were cut to situate the twenty acres of roads now on the site. A brown wrought iron fence runs along the perimeter of the property; the main entrance is through a gatehouse at roughly the center of the western edge along Pulaski Road. The cemetery was laid out in three major stages: the original plat, now the west-central section, by John V. Benes in 1878; a second, to the east and south of the first, by August Petrtyl in 1903; and the last, to the north, by Jens Jensen of the Chicago park system, in 1906 (Figure 1).

The Benes design consists of a grid of six north-south and six east-west streets. The widest of these is the main road that leads from the gatehouse--at the west--to what is now the site of the Civil War memorial--near what was once the eastern edge of the cemetery. Benes included three circular areas approximately thirty feet in diameter in his design: one a block east of the gatehouse on the main road (Figure 2), a second two blocks north of the first, and a third three blocks east of the first. Eventually, these became the sites of major public monuments (described below). One full block, called the park, to the northwest of the third circle and facing the main road, has been left open to accommodate public gatherings (Figure 3). The Petrtyl design of 1903 extended the east-west roads of the Benes design to the east and south, but with picturesque curving lanes and organically-shaped blocks. The 1906 Jensen design used a similar design vocabulary and extended Benes' north-south roads into the northern portion of the cemetery. An undivided portion of the property, containing utilitarian structures and a small oval lagoon, occupies the southwest corner. To the east of this, and north of the river bend, is an undeveloped portion of the cemetery where excess soil from graves is spread.

All areas of the site are planted with a variety of deciduous trees (oaks, maples, and elms), conifers, and ornamental and flowering trees and scrubs. The original plat was heavily planted with elm trees, which in historical photographs form a dramatic canopy (Figure 2), but the majority of these were lost to

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Dutch elm disease in the 1970s. Arbor vitae and boxwood shrubs mark particular gravesites. Ornamental plantings of seasonal flowers in the Czech fashion, once extensive and the pride of the cemetery, are now less common and restricted to specific gravesites.

The Public Monuments

There are six major public monuments in Bohemian National Cemetery from the period of significance. All except one, the United Spanish War Veterans Memorial, occupy significant points on the original plat of the cemetery. The Ladimir Klacel Monument, dedicated in 1885 (Figure 5, Number 11 on the cemetery map), occupies the center of Klacel Circle and honors Frantisek Matous Klacel, a Bohemian patriot and philosopher born in 1808. It consists of a geometric granite pedestal with a tapered and chamfered shaft. This holds a white marble portrait bust of Klacel in the Classical Revival style by the Czech sculptor Frantisek Hess. Klacel Circle includes the grave markers and tombs of six important members of the Czechoslovak community of Chicago, set at the points of the compass.

The Civil War Veterans Monument, produced by Gorham Manufacturing and Art Founders and dedicated in 1892 (Figure 6, map Number 9), stands in a circle, on the main road, opposite the gatehouse, at the eastern edge of the original cemetery property. The pedestal is gray granite, with a four-tiered, rectangular base and a mid-section featuring stylized classical temple façades on all four sides. Above it is a monumental bronze figure of a standing Union soldier in uniform holding a rifle with a fixed bayonet in his proper right hand and a furled flag in his proper left hand. The United Spanish War Veterans Memorial, dedicated in 1926 (Figure 7, map Number 10), is located to the northwest of the Civil War memorial, in the eastern portion of the cemetery laid out by Petryl in 1903. It consists of a monumental bronze sculpture of an American soldier in uniform and gear characteristic of that war. He holds his rifle nearly horizontally before him just below the waist. The figure is the work of Theodora Ruggles Kitson; it stands on a twenty-five ton red granite rock shaped to suggest a natural boulder.

The Mother Monument, dedicated in 1927 (Figure 8, map Number 4), is located in front of the crematorium, just south of the main road, which it faces, and half way between the main gatehouse and the Civil War memorial. It is the work of the Czech-born Chicago sculptor Albin Polasek. The bronze stature stands on a low, limestone base flanked by two urns. The female figure at the center wears a mantel and cloak. Her proper left forearm holds a nude child tight to her bosom. The right side of the cloak enfolds the figure of an adolescent male, who is nude except for a loin cloth. His proper right hand, holds a lighted torch. There is a second version of this statue in the northeastern section of the cemetery (map Number 14). The Odd Fellows Monument, dedicated in 1937 (Figure 9, map Number 8), is at the northwestern corner of the park, just to the northwest of the Civil War memorial. It honors deceased members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the Rebekahs, the order's woman's organization. It faces west and is in the form of a gray granite, six-columned, Tuscan-order peristyle,

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fourteen feet tall and twenty-four feet wide. It has a bronze plaque at its center and flanking classical urns; fraternal symbols line the frieze above.

The World War I and II Memorial, dedicated in 1952 (Figure 10, map Number 2), stands in the circle just inside of the gatehouse on the main road. It was designed by Chicago architect Joseph R. Bednarik and consists of a forty-four foot aluminum flagpole mounted on a large octagonal base of brown sand stone. A different United States flag, donated by the family of a deceased veteran, flies daily in that soldier's honor. Memorials depicting major events of the two wars are carved into each flat face of the base. The Four Freedoms (of speech and worship; from want and fear) are shown in symbolic form and repeated on each side of the base in a frieze around the top edge.

The Architecture

Currently, the cemetery contains nine permanent structures. The main gatehouse, built in 1893, and added to in 1907 (figs. 11a-b; map Number 1), is located at the western edge of the property and opens onto Pulaski Road. It houses a guard station, plus separate waiting and rest rooms for men and women. It is of rusticated grey limestone with a red terracotta tile roof. The style is medieval revival, mixing turrets, a picturesque and crenellated roof line, and pointed arches on the windows, as well as the main entrance to the site. The interiors of the waiting rooms (figs. 11 c-d), nearly untouched, feature polychrome ceramic tile floors, broad windows that overlook a long porch, dark oak trim, and a green ceramic tile fireplace with a green marble mantel. Facing the gatehouse one block to the north, along the fence bordering Pulaski Road, is the administration building, dedicated in 1926 (Figures 12 a-c, map Number 3), which houses the board room, the office of the superintendent, administrative offices, a flower shop, and the remains of the greenhouse. The interior has been altered. The building is a rectangular, single story structure of ashlar limestone with a hipped roof and in a simplified Renaissance Revival style. A quadrastyle entrance portico, with foliate capitals and a pediment with dentils, is flanked on each side by two round-arched windows. A large and elaborate greenhouse once was adjacent to the Administration Building, but its operation has been greatly curtailed, and except for a small portion attached to the southwest corner of the administration building, only the white concrete foundations remain.

The crematorium, dedicated in 1919 (Figure. 13 a-b, map Number 5), lies at a right angle to and facing the main road on the third block east of the gatehouse. It includes a columbarium on the upper level to the north, a large upper chapel to the south, cremation ovens below, and a smaller lower chapel. The exterior (Figures 13 a-b) is Renaissance Revival and is reminiscent of a traditional basilica plan. The exterior surfaces are of ashlar limestone, and the dome is covered with red terracotta tiles. The entrance located to the north of the columbarium and marked by six Tuscan-order columns and a balustraded parapet is recessed between two flanking cubical corner blocks, each with a round-arched window. A single rectangular bell tower sits over the center of the north end, just behind the main façade; the dome, with sixteen ribs, rises above the drum of the main chapel to the south. Reminiscent

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of the nave and aisles of a basilica plan, the interior of the columbarium (Figures 13 f-i) consists of three parallel halls lined with small glazed niches for cremation urns with a wide center hall and two narrower flanking halls. The main chapel (Figures 13 j-l), to the south of the columbarium, is a circular space consisting of a two-story cylindrical drum below, with leaded and stained-glass clerestory windows. Four sets of paired, colossal Tuscan-order columns--set on five-foot tall plinths that define a square--join the two stories of the drum. Above, a monumental, hemispherical coffered dome encloses the space. Polychrome, hand-painted fraternal symbols and ornamental patterns cover the plaster walls and the vault. The smaller chapel below, lined with glazed niches, is rectangular, simpler in style, and devoid of ornamentation. The area for the cremation ovens is spare and utilitarian.

A three-building ensemble (Figure 14), consisting of a water tower, a pump house, and a employee locker and lunchroom, sits just off of the northwest corner of the lagoon. All were completed in 1950. The cylindrical water tank, to the west, is built of wood and set on a tall, slightly tapering, red brick cylindrical tower. An iron railing surrounds the tank, and the name of the cemetery is painted on two of its sides. The pump house, at the center, is a flat-roofed, single story, cubical structure of rough red brick with smooth red brick linear and geometric accents. The locker and lunchroom, to the east, is a single-story cylinder of the same materials as, and of a design similar to, the pump house. The single door faces north, and its roof is octagonal with a low peak at the center.

A brick garage and repair shop, built sometime after 1936 (Figure 15), stands off of the southwest corner of the lagoon. The rectangular exterior is built of light brown Chicago common brick with smooth red brick trim. A single garage door opens to the west. The windows have been replaced by glass blocks. The roof is supported by curved wooden trusses and wooden rafters. The floors are concrete. The interiors of the water tower, pump house, locker room, and garage are spare and utilitarian.

A 1925 duplex residence (Figure 16), originally built to house the superintendent of the cemetery and the comptroller of the cemetery association, sits at the southwest corner of the grounds, just north of the bend in the Chicago River. Built of red bricks with a hipped, terracotta tile roof, the structure consists of a central, two-story, cubical core and two identical, single-story, rectangular wings set parallel to the main section and connected to it with short halls at the front. The wings resemble Chicago-style bungalows in their design and layout; the central section is in a simplified Prairie Style. All of the interiors feature double-hung windows, plaster walls, and blonde oak woodwork and floors.

A blonde brick warehouse built in 1949, and used for general storage, which was situated on the crescent of land sold to the city of Chicago, was razed in 2005. The Masaryk Memorial mausoleum (Figure 17, map Number 15), at the northwest corner of the property, dates from 1959, and thus is not within the period of significance. The Mausoleum contains niches for the inurnment of cremations and crypts for above ground burial. It is rectangular in plan, symmetrical, and a single story tall. It is built

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of steel, but covered with white marble veneers. The design is geometric and planar, and consists entirely of horizontal lintels supported by vertical piers. Only the sparest geometric ornament connects the structure to the classical tradition. Two additional wings, of similar design, were constructed in 1975.

The Mausoleums and Grave Markers

Besides the six public monuments, there are nine and one-half acres of single graves with private monuments on the total of eighty acres of lots. The current estimate of entombments by the superintendent of the cemetery is 110,000. The markers for these individual and family grave sites vary from simple, geometric granite head stones to elaborately carved architectural and figural memorials in marble, limestone, and granite. There are forty-eight private family mausoleums in a variety of styles, mostly nineteenth-century revival styles, interspersed throughout the property.

The first mausoleum in the cemetery was built in section O by the Vollerston family in 1883 (Figure 18). It is a simple, nearly unornamented, cubical structure of quarry-faced granite masonry, a gabled roof, and foliate molding surrounding the doorway. The materials and style are representative of several mausoleums in the cemetery that are based on the Romanesque Revival style. The Triner mausoleum of 1904, in section 15 (Figure 19), is in the Egyptian Revival style and features two papyrus-capital columns *in antis* flanking the central entrance and a flared cornice above with an Egyptian winged solar disk motif in low relief. A stained glass window at the rear of the interior displays the Mason's symbol. A semi-circular exedra punctuated at its ends with urns on rectangular bases encloses the compact, cubical structure. The urns are encircled with lotus blossoms, Egyptian symbols of rebirth, in low relief. The 1943 Hurt mausoleum in section 21 (Figure 20) is an equally compact, cubical structure, but in the Gothic Revival style. The elegantly simple main body of the mausoleum tapers gracefully from a narrow base upwards to a simple, geometric cornice. The pointed arch of the entrance at the center is embellished with delicately carved Gothic-style foliate ornament in the form of grape vines, perhaps Eucharistic symbols. The bronze doors feature lancets and quatrefoils.

The 1928 Stejskal-Buchal mausoleum, in section 18 (Figure 21) in a simplified Classical Revival style, shows a novel conjunction of architecture and sculpture. Again compact and cubical in form, its granite, ashlar masonry walls are unornamented. At the front, a simplified frieze supports an equally spare pediment. A semi-circular portico extends from the frieze and is supported at the rear corners by Tuscan pilasters and at the front by two Tuscan columns. The portico is designed to reach out to meet an over-life sized bronze figure that faces it on a direct axis with the entrance. *The Pilgrim* (Figure 22) is by the Czech-American sculptor Albin Polasek, the artist of the Mother Monument. Bent with age and leaning on a tall staff, the aged and heavily shrouded figure strides towards two granite stepping stones and the mausoleum's door suggesting the steady progress towards, and the inevitability of, death.

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The Krupka mausoleum of 1910, in section 10 (Figure 23), features a more contemporary style. It shows the influence of two famous mausoleums by the Chicago architect Louis Sullivan. The cubical shape and thin, rectangular cornice are similar to the Getty tomb of 1890, and the dome resembles that of the Wainwright tomb of 1892. The ornament running along the cornice, surrounding the door, and at the upper corners of each side reflect the taste for simplified, abstract and geometric motifs favored by a variety of architects and designers of the Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, and Craftsman styles then current in Europe and America.

From an historical standpoint, the most important mausoleum in Bohemian National Cemetery is that of Anton J. Cermak, in section 21 (Figure 24). Born in Kladno, Czechoslovakia, he was the first of his nationality to become mayor of Chicago. He was also an important supporter of the Czech-American community in Chicago and of the Bohemian National Cemetery. In 1933, Cermak was struck by a bullet intended for the President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt. His remains were entombed in the Cermak family mausoleum, and on his official visit to the Chicago World Fair of 1933, Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor visited the cemetery to place a wreath (Figure 25).

The mausoleum, which dates from 1928, features a cubical structure of ashlar granite masonry with elements of the Art Deco modernism of the day. Two simplified columns set *in antis*, fluted, but untapered and without bases or capitals, provide the only ornament for the structure. It relies for its aesthetic impact instead on its elegant proportions and geometry, subtly chamfered corners, and low, rectangular, stepped-back roof. An inscription carved into the marble panel enclosing Cermak's tomb repeats his famous words to Roosevelt: "I am glad it was me instead of you."

The complete list of mausoleums is as follows:

<u>Family</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Lot</u>
Belant, Frances	13	437	Kralovec, James M.	24	24
Brabec	24	480	Krupka	10	23
Cerma, Mayor Anton J.	21	1	Kucera, Frank	21	295
Cervenka, John A.	14	263	Kuthan - Kub	19	1
Chott (Anna) - Soucek	23	254	Macal, Marie	23	1
Craig - Oscar	W	50	Mandl, Rose	23	136
Dominic, Elizabeth	22	333	Marik, H. and Sons	17	2
Duda, Joseph F.	25	433	Mejdrich, Frank	15	17
Fous, Frank	22	240	Mesce	13	449
Gardner, Catherine	13	447	Rokusek, Jerry	24	334
Hradecky, N. and A.	21	211	Skala, Frank J.	20	257
Hurt, Josefa	21	56	Soukup, Edward F.	28	171
Janovsky-Johns, K. V.	14	227	Stancl, Frank	24	352

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Jecmen, Anton	11	233	Stejskal - Buchal	18	337
Juriss, Zuzanna	22	218	Svoboda	18	1
Kaspar, William	14	1	Triner, Joseph	15	285
<u>Family</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Lot</u>
Kastner, Emma	1	144	Tuma, Filomena	21	51
Kerka, Frank	22	313	Vajdik, Frank	21	14
Klicka, Anna	14	9	Viduna, Anna	25	20
Kobzina, Marie	22	165	Vollerston, A.	0	10
Kolar, A.	M	5	Wellik	22	1
Kolarik, Frank	24	486	Zajicek, Frank	24	449
Kotrba, William	23	34	Zelezny, John	25	456
Krasa, J. M.	19	192	Zeman	25	470

With thousands of individual grave stones and monuments spanning a century and a quarter in the cemetery, virtually every type of marker that found favor in the Midwest is represented in Bohemian National Cemetery. Of these, two types are notable. First, a distinctive Victorian type of funerary monument: the cut tree. This type, most often in limestone, takes the form of a cut or shattered tree trunk, often with additional stubs of broken tree limbs. They vary in size from images of short stumps to monumental images of entire trunks. The Kučera family marker of circa 1892, in section J (Figure 26), has no religious symbols, but the iconography involves death, or more particularly, life cut short by death, as symbolized by the shattered tree trunk and the potted lily that has tumbled over to the left. The mushrooms and creeping ivy that encircle the trunk symbolize the eternal cycle of life and death. Clasped hands on the front of the trunk indicate that the marker memorializes a married couple. The Broznik family marker of circa 1834, in section N (Figure 27), on the other hand, incorporates specifically Catholic iconography, in the form of the crucifix at the top front. In this instance, the reference is to the wood of the cross, the Christian instrument of salvation and eternal life. The fallen lily at the base again reinforces the theme of life cut short, while the mushrooms, vine, and ivy imagery symbolize new life from death. The marker also includes the clasped hands.

The second notable marker type is the image of the standing soldier. These became popular at the time of World War I, and most were erected over the tombs of soldiers and sailors who died in service during that war. The Janeček family marker in section 15 (Figure 28) and the Zelenka family marker in section 20 (Figure 29) are generally characteristic of this type. They memorialize Jan Janeček and Václav J. Sibrava, who died in World War I, in 1919 and 1918, respectively. Both figures, the first limestone, the second, marble, stand proud and erect in a formal, frontal, military pose on a low base that surmounts a tall, rectangular pedestal of granite. Each shows the deceased soldier in the characteristic uniform of his branch of the armed forces and with appropriate attributes such as field glasses, rifles, rucksacks, etc.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

The Bohemian National Cemetery is nationally significant under Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage for its association with the Czech-American history of the Chicago area. The Cemetery also meets Criterion C for Architecture, Art and Landscape Architecture. A portion of the layout of the cemetery was designed by Jens Jensen, one of the most important American landscape designers of the nineteenth century. The Cemetery also contains individual structures of architectural significance and aesthetic value and the entire ensemble of landscape design, architecture and monuments/grave markers reflects the values of the Czech community that founded it. The period of significance for the Bohemian National Cemetery is from 1877, when Bohemian National Cemetery was founded, until the fifty-year cutoff date of 1956. The Cemetery meets Criteria Consideration D because it derives its primary significance from its association with the Czech-American community in Chicago and because of its distinctive design features and architecture.

Bohemian National Cemetery represents an interesting conjunction of historical circumstances, immigrant American pride, and important art, architecture, and landscape design. The founding of the cemetery and the continuing activities of its board of directors reflect a deep and complex relationship to the immigrant Czech and Czech-American community in Illinois. The founding resulted from a deep division within that group over religious and philosophical issues, one unique to the Czech-American community in Chicago and the United States. The continuing activities of the cemetery and its board reflect the deep-seated immigrant and American values of cultural pride, cultural preservation, and patriotism.

Founding and Operations

The Founding Circumstances

On February 12, 1877, members of the Bohemian-American community in Chicago met to establish a cemetery to serve their funereal needs. (Bohemia being, with Moravia, one of the two provinces of the historical Czech lands in central Europe). Among them were representatives of twenty Czech benevolent, workingmen's, fraternal, gymnastic, and freethinkers' societies. The list is long, but its make-up significant: Benevolent Society Jiri, Bohemian American Sokol, Bohemian Military Company, Bohemian Tailor's Society, Bohemian Workingmen's Benevolent Society, Bohemian Workingmen's Society Rovnost, Bohemian Workingmen's Sokol Society, Congregation of Freethinkers, Dramatic Society Thalia, Fire Aid Society, Lodge Praha No. 13 C.S.P.S., Lodge Rovnost No. 14 C.S.P.S., Lodge Vernost No. C.S.P.S., Singing Society Lyra, Slavonian Bohemian National Benevolent Society, Sokol Gymnastic Association, St. John Society, St. Procopius Benevolent Society, St. Vaclav Benevolent Society, Workingmen's Benevolent Society Pokrok. However, this list includes only the societies that were officially recorded; early accounts noted that eighty delegates, representing all but two of the national societies, actually attended.¹

¹ *The Centennial of the Bohemian National Cemetery Association of Chicago, Illinois 100 Years, 1877-1977.* (Cicero-Berwyn Press, Inc. Berwyn, Illinois, 1977), p. 45.

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On March 12, 1877, the Bohemian National Cemetery Association was formally organized, with eight founding societies: Bohemian National Benevolent Society, Bohemian Workingmen's Benevolent Society, Fire Aid Society, Lodge Rovnost No. 13, C.S.P.S., Sokol Gymnastic Organization, St. Procopius Benevolent Society, St. Vaclav Benevolent Society, and Workingmen's Benevolent Political Society Pokrok.² A committee subsequently identified several suitable locations in what was then Jefferson Township; ultimately, it settled on a fifty acre site east of Pulaski Avenue.³ On April 11, 1877, the Illinois Secretary of State issued the charter for the Bohemian National Cemetery Association articles of incorporation. According to this document, the purpose of the Association was "to provide suitable burial site for persons of Bohemian birth or extraction."⁴

This incorporation occurred in the face of strong objections from the Jefferson Township. One letter of complaint compared cemeteries to "glue-factories, brickyards, tanneries, rendering establishments, toll roads, sink holes for the depositing of offal, and the carcasses of the city's dead animals." In conclusion, one A. B. Munn wrote:

...some of the most desirable residence property in the vicinity of Chicago, is located in the exact vicinity where the cemetery desires to go. Undulating enough for beautifully varied scenery, susceptible of perfect drainage, and ornamented with grand forest trees, it is even now, without the aid of art, a series of magnificent parks and natural gardens; and the time is not far distant when, in spite of our hitherto bad policy, these lands will be in great demand as residence property of a class of people whose wealth, intelligence and refinement will render them valuable acquisitions to any community.... I most emphatically protest against granting the privilege of turning these beautiful parks into graveyards.⁵

The "parks and natural gardens" that Munn wrote of were actually orchards and pastures, and the complaints probably had more to do with potential losses to the township's tax base than with aesthetic concerns. Regardless, the cemetery association defied objections, deflected lawsuits, and made its first interment on July 1, 1877, on an accelerated schedule, following the advice of an attorney.

Then, on September 7, 1877, four thousand members of the Bohemian community gathered at DeKoven and Taylor Streets in Chicago (then the heart of the main Czech neighborhood--still known as Pilsen, after the city in the current Czech Republic), walked to the Chicago and North Western train station, and boarded twenty-five cars that delivered them to the Irving Park station. From there they walked to the newly established Bohemian

² *Centennial*, p. 46.

³ *Centennial*, p. 48.

⁴ *Centennial*, p. 47.

⁵ Helen A. Sclair, "Ethnic Cemeteries: Underground Rites," in Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones, eds., *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait*, 4th ed., Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995.

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National Cemetery for its formal dedication. A picnic on the cemetery grounds followed, then an evening of dancing at the Sokol (that is, gymnastic) Hall, back in Pilsen.⁶

The founding of the Bohemian National Cemetery set a trend. Bohemian communities throughout the United States were emerging simultaneously, and other "national" (meaning ethnic) cemeteries followed, including the Bohemian National Cemetery in Baltimore in the early 1880s; Bohemian National Cemetery in Omaha in the 1890s; Czech National Cemetery (in the 1940s, renamed Bohemian National Cemetery) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1895; Bohemian National Cemetery in Braidwood, Illinois, in 1889; and The Bohemian National Cemetery in Chippewa County, Wisconsin, in 1905.

Cemeteries in Chicago

There are several notable aspects to the Bohemian National Cemetery. First, within Chicago, to date, it was unique. Prior to its establishment, city cemeteries were either civic institutions, that is, non-denominational and multi-ethnic; or religious institutions, either strictly ethnic or multi-ethnic. For example, Saint Adalbert's Cemetery in Niles, founded in 1872, although only a few acres, would sell a section of land to a Polish or Bohemian parish, which, in turn, would resell lots to the individual parishioners.⁷ Bohemian National Cemetery although ethnically oriented, was not denominational, or, most importantly, even religious.

The Czechs in Chicago

A second notable aspect of the founding is the unprecedented degree of support the Cemetery Association enjoyed among the Czech-American community in Chicago represented by the four thousand members of the Bohemian community who attended the dedication, but more importantly, by the twenty Czech organizations that sent representatives to the initial meeting and by the eight founding societies. This widespread support reflected the essential role that the cemetery and the cemetery association played in the Czech community in Chicago.

No census surveyed Chicagoans of Czech origin before 1870, but in that year of a total population of 298,977 only 6,277 were Czech or Bohemian. In 1877, the number was about 30,000, compared to an Irish population of approximately 44,000 and an Italian population of roughly 1,000. By 1900, the numbers were 1,698, 575 total residents and 36,362 of Czech or Bohemian origin. That same year, 76,480 Chicagoans had one or both parents born in Bohemia⁸.

The period of greatest Bohemian immigration was from 1900 to 1914. World War I brought it to a standstill, and Czech immigration never recovered, due to low immigrations quotas after the war and the

⁶ *Centennial*, p. 45.

⁷ Sclair, pp. ??.

⁸ Eugene R. McCarthy, *Bohemians in Chicago and their Benevolent Societies: 1875-1946*, M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1950, p.1.

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liberation of the Czech homeland from the Austro-Hungarian Empire by the war, which removed the chief rationale for immigration. The 1920 census listed 50,392 Czech-born Chicagoan of a total population of 2,701,705.⁹

The Czechs settled first just north of the present Lincoln Park in an area called the "Bohemian Quarters." These squatters moved south and west to a second settlement, later the site of the La Salle Street Station, when the proprietor of the first settlement claimed his rights in 1855. A third settlement, on Beach Street, gave way to the railroad, pushing the Czechs west and south to their first established neighborhood, centered on Taylor, De Koven, and Bunker Streets, north of Twelfth Street--called *Praha* or Prague, after the Czech capital.¹⁰

The great Chicago Fire of 1871 accelerated this movement south and west, now beyond the Burlington Railroad lines to neighborhoods know as *Mala Jinni Strana* (Little South Side) and *Plzen* (Pilsen). The latter became the new Czech center in Chicago and remained the main quarter until the 1950s (although Czech names still mark many buildings there).¹¹ From here, the line of movement proceeded mainly westward, first to the prairies between Western Avenue and the suburbs of Lawndale, an area dubbed "Czech California." A smaller settlement, circa 1871, developed on Twenty-Fifth Street, and was called *Mala jinni stran* (Little South Side). A neighborhood of prosperous Czechs, settled after 1880, and centered on Twelfth Street and Roosevelt Road (known as *Vinohrady*), never quite developed.

The movement towards the outskirts continued with the Town of Lake, near the famous Chicago Stock Yards, settled about 1890. South of the Town of Lake, on the Grand Crossing, a new Czech settlement known as *Na Knzovatce* (The Cross-roads) developed. Around 1900, a new Czech colony sprang up west of Douglas Park, mainly on Crawford Avenue, and was called *Tabor*. In the western parts of both Englewood and Pilsen, *Za Vapenkami* (Beyond the lime-kilns) and *Klatovy* developed.¹²

Eventually, even before 1900, the typical centrifugal patterns of urban settlement pushed Czechs still westward into the suburbs of Chicago--especially in Cicero and Berwyn. These two areas have been populated mainly by Latinos since the mid-1970s. Czechs also moved to other western suburbs: North Riverside, Riverside, Lyons, Stickney, Brookfield, La Grange, Western Springs, Westchester, Oak Park, and River Forest.¹³ Today the Chicago suburbs of Hinsdale, Westmont, Oak Brook, Downers Grove, Lisle, and Naperville have significant populations of Czech-Americans.¹⁴

⁹ McCarthy, p. 3.

¹⁰ Francis Dvornik, *Czech Contributions to the Growth of the United States*, Chicago, Benedictine Abbey Press, 1961, p. 29.

¹¹ Dvornik, pp. 31-32.

¹² Dvornik, pp. 32-33.

¹³ Dvornik, p. 33.

¹⁴ Dvornik, p. 33.

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The location of the Bohemian National Cemetery itself reflected this typical, centrifugal pattern of urban development, if not the general westward movement of the Czech community that supported it. Health concerns and public disdain (of the type expressed in the letter cited earlier in the text) typically pushed cemeteries to the fringe of the urban core. And, the Czech community knew what the developers of the Chicago park system did: large tracts of real estate were more affordable outside of the city center, yet simultaneously accessible via the developing transportation infrastructure that fueled the ever outward expansion, in this case the same North Western rail line used by the cemetery dedicatees in September of 1877.¹⁵

The Benevolent Societies

As noted, the cemetery and its association served a variety of functions for the Czech community and its member organizations. These values, the historical circumstances surrounding the founding, and the ties between the cemetery and the Chicagoans who founded and supported it are all complex and require detailed consideration. First, it is important to note the number of Czech benevolent societies involved in the founding of the cemetery. Most foreign language groups in Chicago had insurance or "benefit" societies, mutual aid associations which offered a measure of economic security to their members. They paid death benefits to the families of deceased members and sometimes made weekly payments in case of sickness. They were the most popular and influential of the societies developed by the Bohemians.¹⁶

The Czecho-Slovak Protective Society (C.S.P.S.), founded in 1854, in St. Louis, was the oldest existing fraternal order in the United States. It aided members in time of sickness, lent a guiding hand to their widows and orphans, and provided death benefits by means of a collection taken upon the death of a member. Like other benevolent societies it first served as a method of insuring against economic insecurity.¹⁷

In 1875, Czechs founded the first benevolent society in Chicago--Lodge Vernost Number 8 of the C.S.P.S. By 1877, five more lodges of the C.S.P.S. were organized in Chicago. By 1884, the C.S.P.S. had 7000 members nation-wide and 2000 in sixteen lodges in Chicago. (Lodge Vernost and two others sent representatives to the organizational meeting of February 12, 1877.) When a member of the C.S.P.S. died, his colleagues took up a collection and gave the proceeds to the family. The amount from each, fifty cents or a dollar, was agreed upon previously. Later, the family would receive a set sum and the society collected a monthly assessment from each member to cover the previous month's disbursements.¹⁸

¹⁵ Harold M. Mayer and Richard C. Wade, *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, pp. 128, 132; and Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991, p. 48.

¹⁶ McCarthy, pp. 1, 26.

¹⁷ McCarthy, p. 27.

¹⁸ McCarthy, pp. 31, 47.

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According to an 1878 newspaper article, "some sixty" Bohemian benevolent societies and lodges existed in Chicago. These typically fell into two categories--local lodges of national societies and independent and purely local societies. Almost exactly at the time of the founding of Bohemian National Cemetery, the societies and their membership increased significantly, to the point where they became the "dominant form of social organization in Bohemian Chicago." By 1915, according to one estimate, there were 500 Bohemian benevolent societies in Chicago.¹⁹

These organizations functioned well enough as benefit societies, but in community matters they had significant problems: the independent groups were too small to accomplish much else on their own, and the national organizations had little stake in local affairs. A common solution was to form "secondary" societies, where members of independent and/or national societies organized into larger groups for a specific community purpose. The Bohemian National Cemetery Association has been called "one of first and most influential of these secondary societies."²⁰ One of the main concerns of its founders was almost certainly practical--the sponsoring benevolent groups, ethnic in nature and founded to ensure death benefits for its members, would surely have been equally concerned about the proper disposition of the remains of its members in a similar community and ethnic setting.

Czech Language, Culture, and Nationalism

But, as important as the Bohemian National Cemetery was for this pragmatic purpose, it also fulfilled important cultural and nationalistic functions. The roster of societies involved in the founding clearly reflects this. In some cases this is obvious--the Dramatic Society Thalia and the Singing Society Lyra that sent representatives to the February 12, 1877, organizational meeting were two cultural groups of the Czech community. With the benevolent societies--seven of the eight founding associations--this is less clear. However, their function in the Czech community was more than simply economic with the gymnastic societies and the parish churches (both to be discussed below), the benevolent organizations became one of the three centers around which the social life of Bohemian Chicago revolved. In fact, by age and prestige, the C.S.P.S. and the chief Czech woman's benevolent society, Libůse (later the Jednota Českých Dám--Union of Bohemian Ladies or J.C.D.), became the foundation of Czech social and intellectual life in the United States. The benevolent societies have been described as having three functions--financial, the death benefits; social, for uniting people of the same ethnic heritage; and cultural, to preserve the language, manners, and culture of the Bohemian community.²¹

In many respects, the Czechs in Chicago faced the same social challenges as other immigrant groups, mastering a foreign tongue and accommodating the dominant Anglo-Saxon and Protestant culture without losing their native language and culture to the forces of assimilation. Yet the historical and political

¹⁹ McCarthy, pp. 48, 54.

²⁰ McCarthy, p. 61.

²¹ McCarthy, pp. 32, 50.

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circumstances of their Czech homeland, circumstances dating back centuries, but still very current, lent these issues an unusual urgency.

In 1526, on the basis of a succession treaty, the Austrian house of Habsburg--German speaking and Roman Catholic--claimed the throne of a previously independent Czech Kingdom that had nurtured the first stirrings of Protestantism as early as the late fourteenth century under John Huss.²² The seat of the Czech crown moved from Prague to Vienna, and in 1627, the Habsburgs imposed a new constitution which installed them as a hereditary dynasty, meaning they were no longer dependent on the election of the Czech Parliament. It also severely restricted the powers of this Parliament, stripped the Czech kingdom of all independence and power (allowing it to exist in name only), and recognized only the Roman Catholic religion giving its clergy important roles in the Parliament and Administration.²³ Under the aegis of the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation, and its chief instrument, the Jesuits, the Hussites were repressed and a policy of censorship initiated with a definition of heresy so all-embracing, and methods so efficient that Czech ceased to be a literary language in the Czech lands for almost 200 years.²⁴

Exiles alone were left to uphold the Czech language and culture. Centuries later, with the Czech provinces of central Europe still dominated by the Habsburgs, the Bohemian immigrants to the United States would see themselves in a comparable light, and would use the new freedoms offered by America to promote their language and culture, partially through their fraternal societies.

However, the cultural and intellectual climate out of which the Czech immigrants came to Chicago in the nineteenth century was stamped by two modern phenomena--the Enlightenment and nationalism.²⁵ Joseph Dobrovský, called the father of the Czech national revival, stabilized the language early in the nineteenth century with the first Czech grammar.²⁶ A later generation absorbed the romantic nationalism of J. G. Herder and wrote tributes to Bohemia's Hussite past. Yet, at the turn of the century, two linguistic groups existed side-by-side in the Czech lands--Czech-speaking peasants, town folk and parish priests, and German-speaking affluent burghers and nobility.²⁷ Germans schools were supported by the crown; Bohemians paid for their own. Only in 1882, five years after the founding of the Bohemian National Cemetery, was Czech spoken to citizens in government offices in Bohemia, although German was still the official language for internal use.²⁸ This

²² A. H. Hermann, *A History of the Czechs*, London: Penguin Books, 1975, pp. 42-56.

²³ Hermann, pp. 42-56.

²⁴ Hermann, pp. 42-56.

²⁵ Hermann, p. 86.

²⁶ John F. N. Bradley, *Czech Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century*, East European Monographs, no. CLVII, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, p. 9.

²⁷ Hermann, p. 90.

²⁸ Hermann, pp. 88, 92.

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revival of culture and language eventually spawned a revolutionary spirit in the Czech lands. An abortive revolution followed in 1848, the implications of which will be discussed below.

But many Chicago Czechs actually emigrated during a period of political reaction (1851 to 1859) that followed the suppression of the Czech revolution. The emperor revoked the constitution, reverted to absolute government, and concluded a concordat with the Pope that returned privileges to the Church, including the control of lower education. He sought imperial coherence through a sanction of one language--German.²⁹

It is exactly at the time of the founding of the Bohemian Cemetery that the Czech benevolent societies and secondary societies, such as the cemetery association, became the dominant form of social organization in Bohemian Chicago. They commonly sponsored social activities meant to preserve Bohemian language and culture---banquets, festivals, dances, and picnics. The societies helped preserve their native language by supporting the Czech press and theatrical performances in Czech. The social affairs of the societies usually benefited charitable causes; later these were formalized into a policy of supporting welfare institutions, such as old people's homes and orphan asylums, and "needy members funds."³⁰ In fact, the official charter from the State of Illinois for the Bohemian National Cemetery reflects this trend perfectly. Besides providing "suitable burial site for persons of Bohemian birth or extraction," it provided for the disposition of any financial surplus the Association might produce:

All surplus funds earned by the Association from voluntary donations or contributions, from the fees charged for individual burials, from the sale of family or other lots, or from other sources, after costs of maintaining the cemetery site, may be used only for any or all of the following purposes, as the Association shall decide:

1. for education of children of Bohemian extraction
2. for the founding and maintenance of a Bohemian Library
3. donations toward the founding and maintenance of a Home for the Aged, a charitable institution or to charitable causes.³¹

The "Home for the Aged" cited in number three was founded in 1894, as the Old Bohemians Home and chartered to "provide and maintain an asylum for aged Bohemians." In 1903, it was renamed the Bohemian Old Peoples and Orphan Asylum, and in 1948, the Bohemian Home for Children and the Aged.³²

²⁹ Hermann, p. 98.

³⁰ McCarthy, pp. 53-54, 57-59.

³¹ *Centennial*, p. 46.

³² From documents in the archives of the Board of Directors of Bohemian National Cemetery.

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The Sokols

It is also notable that three Bohemian gymnastic societies sent representatives to the February 12, 1877, organizational meeting, and that one, the Sokol Gymnastic Organization, was a sponsoring society. The Sokol ("falcon") movement began in Bohemia in 1862, inspired by the Greek ideal of a sound mind in a sound body and the belief that healthy bodies are the first necessity of a nation. Eventually, branches formed throughout Bohemia. They were another part of the Bohemian nationalistic movement. The sokols met regularly for gymnastic training and social activities. Festivals were held annually in provincial towns and on a national scale in Prague every four years.³³ The founders aimed to integrate the people physically, mentally, spiritually into a national culture.³⁴ They gave plays and learned songs in Bohemian, studied the history of Bohemia, and established libraries and reading rooms in various parts of the country.³⁵ According to historian A. H. Hermann, "By the end of the century the gymnastic movement had become a political force of considerable importance....It was to play its part in the independence movement during the First World War and in establishing the authority of the new republic."³⁶

Within three years of their inception in Bohemia, the sokol movement came to America. In 1864, Sokol Slovanská Lipa, named for a revolutionary organization established in Prague in 1848, erected a combination meeting hall and gymnasium. Other Czech sokols came to Chicago in 1870s; and in 1878, Chicago became the center of the sokol movement in the United States when the first Sokol Gymnastic Union of America organized there.³⁷

Typically, Chicago sokols held meetings once a month and drilled one or two nights a week at a sokol hall or at the gymnasium of a Catholic parish. They sponsored annual gymnastic exhibitions and family holiday outings that included drills, tournaments, and folk dancing. The sokol hall was normally one of the largest buildings in a Bohemian neighborhood--and one of the centers of its cultural and social life. It often housed the community's other major cultural institutions, such as the Czech theater and choral societies.³⁸

The Freethinkers

To fully understand the nature of the Czech community in Chicago and its intimate ties to the cemetery association, it is also crucial to note the presence of one particular society at the meeting of February 12, 1877--the Congregation of Freethinkers. They represented a significant faction of the Czech-America community in Chicago, one that sets the Czechs apart from every other immigrant group in the city. This involved a split in the community, often acrimonious, between the religiously inclined, mainly Roman Catholics, and rationalist

³³ Hermann, p. 107.

³⁴ Bradley, p. 24.

³⁵ McCarthy, p. 44.

³⁶ Hermann, p. 107.

³⁷ McCarthy, pp. 24, 45.

³⁸ McCarthy, pp. 25, 45.

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non-believers--the Freethinkers. Joseph Čada described the split: "...the Czechs...suffered from a profound social cleavage, whose causes were several but whose existence was precipitated by the mid-nineteenth century appearance of a nationally motivated opposition to the symbiosis which marked the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church to the Austro-Hungarian State."³⁹ In fact, the founding of the cemetery reflects just this cleavage. Recounting the incident that spurred the first meeting, the official account of the cemetery association described:

...an unfortunate incident involving a Bohemian woman, Marie Silhanek, who died on July 25, 1876. Although a devout Catholic, she was denied burial at several Catholic cemeteries, by Father Joseph Molitor, priest of Saint James Church on DeKoven Street, then a predominately Bohemian enclave in Chicago, simply because she made no confessions prior to her death. This so aroused the Bohemian population of Chicago, then numbering about 30,000, that a cry was raised for organizing a cemetery for Bohemian people, which would not be under ecclesiastical control.⁴⁰

As Čada notes, the origins of the Freethinkers among the Czech can be traced to the old country and involve the same circumstances of culture and history as the rise of Czech nationalism. And the historical roots ran deep--back to the suppression of the Protestant Hussites by the Roman Catholic Habsburg regime. A. H. Herman, in *A History of the Czechs*, describes it well:

Modern Czech history and politics cannot easily be understood without some knowledge of the effect of the Hussite wars on the Czechs....they remember Jan Huss, and in a country where generation after generation has been obliged to compromise and conceal its true views to survive, the contrasting image of a man, who was ready to die at the stake rather than give up his vision of truth, has a redeeming magic....the Czechs of the nineteenth century--seeing themselves as patriots of a small ethnic island in a sea of Germans--drew comfort from the thought that though small in numbers the Hussites were able to withstand the onslaught of the German Catholic armies.⁴¹

The Czech king Charles had supported reform-minded churchmen, for example, Jan Huss, the dean of the philosophy faculty of Prague University. So had his son, Václav IV, until 1412, when he was promised a share in the proceeds from the sale of papal indulgences (the prime target--with the theological concept of transubstantiation--of reformist propaganda). Václav punished the leaders of demonstrations against indulgences providing the first martyrs to the cause and helping to popularize it. The Pope issued an interdict of all religious services in Prague as long as Huss remained there. He was summoned to the Council of Constance, and, refusing to submit, was declared a heretic and burned at the stake on July 6, 1415, despite having a safe

³⁹ Joseph Čada, "Czechs of Chicago," in *Panorama: A Historical Review of Czechs and Slovaks in the United States of America*, Cicero, Illinois, The Czechoslovak national Council of America, 1970, p. 31.

⁴⁰ *Centennial*, p. 46.

⁴¹ Hermann, p. 41.

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conduct and a petition signed by 450 representatives of the Czech nobility.⁴² In July 1419, Huss's followers stormed the New Town Hall and killed their adversary's leaders. Adopting military tactics, they quickly dominated the Czech lands. Václav, with his brother, the emperor Sigismund, assembled an army. But following its defeat, Rome initiated a diplomatic offensive, turned the Protestant barons, and defeated the Táborites (Czech Protestant warriors) in 1436 paving the way for a negotiated settlement, which accommodated the Czech Protestants.⁴³

Weak emperors made two concessions to the Czech nobles: one, confirming religious freedom for Catholics and Protestants alike, regardless of the religion professed by the lord on whose possessions they lived; a second guaranteeing that the property of the Czech nobles would not be confiscated for political offences. Still, the emperor and the Church encroached on Protestant liberties. The Radical wing of the Protestants initiated a revolt, but an incoherent one. The imperial army moved toward Prague unopposed, met the Protestant army at White Mountain, and defeated it in a two hour battle.⁴⁴ Retribution followed and twenty-six Protestant leaders were condemned for high treason, mutilated, and beheaded in Prague; less prominent people also likely lost their lives. The property of Protestant nobles was confiscated; peasants were forcibly converted to Catholicism; free Protestants, nobility and burghers were given the choice of conversion or emigration. It is estimated that 300,000 emigrated, including almost the entire educated stratum.⁴⁵

Nationalistic sentiment swelled again only in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century. In the absence of any true political life under the Habsburg regime, however, this occurred first as social and cultural struggle, for example, in the rehabilitation of the Bohemian language.⁴⁶ Still, it was these Czech nationalists who fomented revolution in 1848.⁴⁷ They were supported by the majority of Czech men of letters, who gave up their cultural activity and, almost without exception, embarked on political careers--making it largely a revolution of intellectuals.⁴⁸ The revolution was quickly suppressed by Austrian troops but, it did accelerate movement toward freethought when a significant number of these Czech men of letters were secularized. Hailing from peasant families, but impregnated by liberal ideas, they did not abandon their faith formally, but became indifferent towards religion.⁴⁹ An Edict of Toleration in 1789, finally allowed 100,000 Bohemians to announce themselves as Protestants, but the Czech rebels none-the-less became devotees of the new "Free Thought."⁵⁰

⁴² Hermann, pp. 32-41.

⁴³ Hermann, pp. 32-41.

⁴⁴ Hermann, pp. 55.

⁴⁵ Hermann, p. 110.

⁴⁶ Bradley, p. 8.

⁴⁷ Bradley, p. 9.

⁴⁸ Bradley, pp. 13-15.

⁴⁹ Bradley, pp. 17, 78.

⁵⁰ McCarthy, p. 34; and Archibald McClure, *Leadership of the New America, Racial and Religious*, New York: George H. Doran Company, 1916, p. 50.

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This Bohemian Freethought movement was one part of a wider European nationalistic, anti-clerical movement. Immigrants brought it to United States from an atmosphere charged with hatred for the Austrians and the Catholic Church that supported and legitimized the regime under the doctrine of the divine right of kings. In America the Freethinker movement had a broader base than in the old country. In Europe, religious indifference and antagonism to the Germans characterized the richer classes and the intellectuals. Here, peasants and workmen, divorced from their accustomed cultural environment and without an intellectual basis for their faith, were won over by the intellectuals--many of whom were ex-priests, turned editors, authors, and lecturers.⁵¹ The doctrine of the Freethinkers was not a rationalistic philosophical system like that of Europeans such as Voltaire, Renan, or Strauss, but has been characterized as a "set of unbeliefs." A catechism used in the Freethought schools consisted of questions and answers denying the existence of God and the inspiration of the bible.⁵²

The roots of the conflict of community and church in Chicago ran deep and involved the demographics of Czech immigration and relationships of church and state, in the old land and new. There were two main waves of Czech immigration in Chicago in the nineteenth century.⁵³ The Czech historian Joseph Chada has commented on both. Of the second he wrote:

Numerically, the Czech immigration seemed to favor the Moravian group after 1880. Having lived in one of the less industrialized Habsburg provinces, the Moravians were ethnically more pure than the Bohemians in spiritual matters, temperament, and lifestyle....They continued their membership in the Catholic Church more steadfastly and sought more insistently to retain the traditions, customs, and idiomatic language of their homeland....The Moravians supported Catholic parish life vigorously and sheltered the church from the powerful forces of the disbelievers at the turn of the century.⁵⁴

Of the first:

The beginning of the Czech migration to America coincided with an internal political crisis in Bohemia which culminated in the abortive Revolution of 1848. The components of the upheaval were born in the Age of Enlightenment and nurtured by the examples of the American and French Revolutions. Though effectively suppressed, the Revolution of 1848, nonetheless, brought some social and political improvements to the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia. It marked the passing of a quasi-feudal economic and administrative system, became the starting points of a guarded political activism, and far across the Atlantic planted in the Czech-American settlement a diligent interest in the national development

⁵¹ McCarthy, p. 35. See also Ernest Zizka, *Czech Cultural Contributions*, Chicago: Oscar Waldemar Juneck, 1941, p. 51.

⁵² McCarthy, p. 36.

⁵³ McCarthy, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Joseph Chada, *The Czechs in the United States*, Washington D.C.: S.V.U. Press, 1981, p. 25.

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of the mother country. In due time the fascination of American Czechs with the course of Bohemian events led to a dedicated effort during World War I in the resistance movement which resulted in a liberated Czechoslovakia.⁵⁵

In Chicago, Catholic parishes of each nationality were loosely federated into ethnic "leagues," although these enjoyed no official status in canon law. The role of the clergy in these national churches and the support they received from their community varied considerably (Polish pastors are said to have ruled their parishes in an exceptionally authoritarian manner, like feudal lords).⁵⁶ The Bohemians stood out from other Eastern Europeans by the high proportion that proved indifferent to Catholicism or any other religion. All East European ethnic groups contained a nationalist faction that was at least mildly anticlerical or secularist in attitude, but Bohemian nationalism had developed into a virtual secular religion.⁵⁷

The circumstances of church-state relationships in America, a system of voluntary church support, provided these immigrants with a degree of leverage in church affairs that they had not enjoyed in their homeland. According to Chada:

The establishment of a Roman Catholic parish in the States required the official approval of the bishop of the diocese where it was to be located. To the Czech immigrant the procedure was new. At home he generally took little interest in the material aspects of his church organization....The church derived financial support from resources provided by the state or the territorial lord. In return it gave moral support to the authority of both. In America...[t]he government and society had no established traditional spiritual authority which promoted conformity among the people....After securing the bishop's permission to establish an ethnic, or as it was better known, "national parish," the Czechs most often relied on the aid of a benevolent fraternal society. Among their several purposes these societies also included aid to religious activities. In Chicago the Czechs relied on the Saint Wenceslaus Society for the erection of the city's first Czech Catholic church in 1863....The church founding societies were essentially not very different from American Protestant congregations, though they differed in their lack of power to administer church property or select their spiritual head. The legitimacy of the Catholic Church corporation was sanctioned by the bishop, who as a proof of authority held legal title to the parish property and designated its priest. The existence of these prerogatives, totally new to the Czech, sometimes resulted in tensions between the bishop and the faithful. Occasionally it led to the defection of part of the congregation to the camp of the Progressives.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Chada, *The Czechs in the United States*, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁶ Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones, eds., *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait*, 4th ed., Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995, pp. ??.

⁵⁷ Holli and Jones, pp. ??.

⁵⁸ Chada, *The Czechs in the United States*, p. 97. See also Joseph Cada, *Czech-American Catholics, Chicago*, Center for Slav Culture, 1964, pp. 24-25.

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Chada also described the tensions that had developed between officials of the Czech national Catholic Church and these more progressive Czech-Americans in Chicago, which makes it clear that the incident concerning Marie Silhanek was not an isolated event, but the result of long simmering tensions:

The first permanent resident Czech priest in Chicago, Father Molitor, faced the most challenging situation of all the pioneer priests. Chicago...had already experienced a strong Progressive evolution.... To make matters worse, the control of Saint Wenceslaus parish, because of inadequate pastoral leadership, had fallen into the hands of its founding society, the benevolent lodge of Saint Wenceslaus. When the Bishop of Chicago appointed Father Molitor to his post in 1868, strained relations prevailed between the Ordinary and the people of Saint Wenceslaus. Many of the faithful, but particularly the members of the society, vigorously asserted their right to the control of the church property. The tension reached an explosive point when plans to erect another parish building called for the use of vacant lots deeded in the society's name. Its officers refused to relinquish possession and initiated a litigation which dragged into the late 1870s. The Bishop won. The legal recognition of the custom that the bishop, not the parishioners, held the deed to parish property had a devastating reaction: part of the congregation revolted and sympathetic reverberations were felt in two other Czech parishes in Chicago. There was a large defection to the camp of the Progressives which inflicted a severe setback to the growth of Czech Catholicism in Chicago.⁵⁹

The resulting law suit was settled only in 1885.⁶⁰ It is important to note that three parish fraternal societies attended the first organizational meeting for the Bohemian National Cemetery: the St. John Society, the St. Procopius Benevolent Society, and the St. Vaclav Benevolent Society, with the last two staying on as founding organizations. Vaclav is Czech for Wenceslaus, this was the notorious lay society that had challenged its priest and bishop over control of church property. Their presence among the founders suggests two things: first, that the founding of the cemetery was a practical matter as much as an ideological statement; and second, that the division between Freethinkers and Catholics in the Chicago Czech community were not complete or unbridgeable. The dual nature of the cemetery founding is indicated by facilities for inhumation, but also cremation, which the Catholic Church did not sanction until 1963.

Yet, the animosity between the two groups resulted in almost exactly parallel institutions--Czech Catholic founded their own publishing houses, newspapers, and sokols; their own benevolent, fraternal, cultural, and workingmen's societies. (There were even competing Czech forester societies).⁶¹ There were orphanages and

⁵⁹ Chada, *The Czechs in the United States*, pp. 100-101. The parish of St. Wenceslaus, in New Prague, Minnesota, underwent similar turmoil, eventually resulting in an interdict against the parish—a ceasing of administration of the sacraments--by the Bishop in St. Paul, Minnesota. It experienced a similar loss of parishioners. See Joseph Cada, *Czech-American Catholics*, pp. 27-28 and pp.35-36.

⁶⁰ Cada, *Czech-American Catholics*, p. 70.

⁶¹ Cada, *Czech-American Catholics*, pp. 58, 90.

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old people's homes supported by the Czech freethinkers, and those supported by Czech Catholics. The severity of the challenge to the Czech Roman Catholic Parishes in Chicago mounted by the freethought movement and the revolt of the benevolent lodge of Saint Wenceslaus is perhaps best reflected by the fact that the Church dispatched the Benedictine order to the city in 1885, in response to this incident and specifically to stem their losses to the progressive camp. Perhaps most tellingly, in 1894, the order established the only Czech-American Roman Catholic monastery and seminary in America, St. Procopius in Chicago. (Later it was moved to Lisle Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, and augmented by a four year college.)⁶²

The ratio of the secularists and the Catholics varied with different sections of the country. In Chicago, it predominantly favored the former, as many as perhaps 70 percent of the Czechs avoided not only the Catholic but also the Protestant faiths.⁶³ Only about 17 percent of the Bohemians belonged to Bohemian Catholic parishes, whereas about 50 percent of the Slovaks and Lithuanians and a remarkable 78 percent of the Poles belonged to their own national churches.⁶⁴

A nationalistic fervor, borne of anti-clerical and anti-Habsburg sentiments, ran high in most of the non-Catholic Czech societies. The C.S.P.S. and J.C.D. actually provided the intellectual leadership and organization for the Bohemian Freethought movement in America. In addition, there were Free-Thinking sokols in Chicago and the nation that cooperated with like-minded benevolent societies. In 1870, the freethought societies, benevolent societies, and the sokols came together to form the "Federation of Bohemian Free-Thinkers." Other freethought benevolent societies followed--the Union of Taborites in 1880; Bohemian American foresters in 1899; the Czech Slavik Union in 1892, The Bohemian American Union in 1892.⁶⁵

Among the community institutions sponsored and supported by the freethought societies, benevolent societies, and sokols was the Freethought Schools, for which some regularly taxed themselves.⁶⁶ The children attended outside of regular school to learn Bohemian and the principles of freethought. In 1879, it was reported that there was at least one such school in each ward with a sizable Bohemian population. One example was the C.S.P.S. school (first on West 18th Street, then at 48th Street and Honore Avenue) founded in 1879. The lower floor was for classroom instruction, the upper half an auditorium in hope its rental would help support the school. The lodges of the C.S.P.S. supported the school by a direct tax on members and by sponsoring occasional bazaars. By 1915, the Czechs supported nineteen such schools in the city and suburbs, with 1,340 pupils all coordinated by the Federation of Bohemian Freethought Schools, with membership drawn from the various Bohemian societies. As late as 1937, nineteen Freethought Schools were still operating in Chicago.⁶⁷

⁶² Cada, Czech-American Catholics, p. 70.

⁶³ Čada, "Czechs of Chicago," p. 31.

⁶⁴ Holli and Jones, pp. ??.

⁶⁵ McCarthy, pp. 25, 38-40.

⁶⁶ McCarthy, p. 66.

⁶⁷ McCarthy, p. 67-68.

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The relationship of the Bohemian National Cemetery to the freethought movement is perhaps best illustrated by the role played by Frantisek Boleslav Zdrůbek in the cemetery's founding and early years. Sent to a Catholic theological seminary in Prague, he experienced a change in faith and actually graduated from a Protestant seminary in Basle, Switzerland.⁶⁸ He briefly led an evangelical congregation of Czech Moravians in Caledonia, Wisconsin, before assimilating the liberal ideas of Voltaire, Paine, Ingersoll, the Czech Klácel, and the American agnostic, Robert O. Ingersoll. As managing editor of *Pokrok*, a Freethinker' weekly, founded in 1867, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, he published, on October 5, 1870, an appeal to liberal Czech-Americans to meet on November 8 (the 250th anniversary of White Mountain) "to establish Unity which would assist our nation in regaining its freedom and honor."⁶⁹ On that date, eleven freethought "congregations" met helping launch the movement in America. In 1875, Zdrůbek moved to Chicago and, with August Geringer, founded, the Chicago Bohemian daily *Svornost*, a leading Freethought newspaper. He remained its editor until his death in 1911. On April 12, 1878, The Bohemian Freethinkers in Chicago (founded already in 1870) received its charter, with Zdrůbek as its "minister."⁷⁰

He published his *Sermons*, delivered chiefly as a Speaker of the Liberal Union in Chicago, between 1879 and 1894; and wrote a rhymed *Comic Bible* (1885).⁷¹ In April of 1877, Zdrůbek engaged in two public debates on Christianity with Father William Čoka, a Chicago priest, his contribution was printed under the title, *Two Religious Disputations*.⁷²

An accomplished journalist, he was also the most prolific Czech *literati* of his day, but less as a creative writer than as an editor and translator. His literary work included two types--dictionaries and grammars, and translations. The first include the following: *English Grammar, How to Pronounce in English, Čech-English Interpreter, Pocket Dictionary of the English and Čech Languages*, and a grammar for Czech elementary schools. His translations from English and German include notable liberal, rationalistic and Freethought texts: *Das Leben Jesu*, by David Friedrich Strauss (1883); *The Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine (1884); *Die Konventionellen Lügen der Kulturmenschheit*, by Max Nordau (1885); and *Kraft and Stof*, by Ludwig Buechner

⁶⁸ Thomas Čapek, *The Čechs in America: A Study of their National, Cultural, Political, Social, Economic and Religious Life*, reprint ed., Wesport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970, pp. 132-33.

⁶⁹ "One Hundred Years of Bohemian Freethinkers in Chicago". From *Panorama: A Historical Review of Czechs and Slovaks in the United States of America*, Cicero, Illinois: Czechoslovak National Council of America, 1970, p. 83. See also Ernest Zizka, *Czech Cultural Contributions*, Chicago: Oscar Waldemar Junek, 1941, p. 51-52.

⁷⁰ "One Hundred Years of Bohemian Freethinkers in Chicago," p. 83.

⁷¹ Čapek, *The Čechs (Bohemians) in America*, pp. 167-69.

⁷² Cada, *Czech-American Catholics*, p. 37.

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(1889).⁷³ As late as 1970, The Bohemian Freethinkers in Chicago still publicly proclaimed allegiance to his legacy.⁷⁴

Characteristically, it was Zdrůbek who took up the challenge of Father Molitor to the Czech-American community in Chicago. In a public address on January 7, 1877, to the freethought association *Svobodná Obec*, he introduced the idea of establishing the Bohemian National Cemetery.⁷⁵ (The association survives, with ten members as of September, 2004.) He sat on the committee formed to call the initial community meeting, was secretary of the first cemetery committee, delivered the principal and dedication address on September 7, 1877, was the principal speaker at the second annual celebration, and wrote the official history of the first twenty-five years of the cemetery.

After the Founding—the First Quarter-Century (1877-1902)

Every twenty-five years the Bohemian National Cemetery Association published an official history, which provides a convenient scheme for organizing its historical significance. After the founding of the cemetery in 1877, the association continued its close ties with Czech benevolent societies, sokols, and freethought societies becoming, in fact, a focal point of Chicago's Bohemian-American community. Delegates to the association were drawn exclusively from these organizations. In November of 1877, the St. Procopius Benevolent Society withdrew its membership, but by December of 1877, three others were admitted--the Bohemian Tailor's Society, the Bohemian Brethren Society, and the Palacky Lodge of the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.).⁷⁶

The association first held meetings in St. Vaclav (Wenceslas) Society Hall in Pilsen, until it was adjudged to be the property of St. Vaclav Church, and not the Society, which was then dissolved. Meetings then moved to the Pilsen Sokol Hall, then, in 1889, to the C.S.P.S. School Hall. It continued to support Czech causes. Also, it adopted a policy of burial without charge of the remains of any Bohemian person without means, made a relief donation of \$50.00 after a coal mine disaster in Coal City, Illinois; and reburied the remains of Robert H. Vickers, the writer of the first history of Bohemia in English, when it was learned that he had died in poverty and was interred elsewhere in a forgotten grave. In May of 1902, the association approved burial free of charge for one F. Vonasek, "a Catholic who had always used abusive language when talking about Freethinkers." He had been denied burial at the city's Catholic cemeteries.

Member organizations, in 1902, numbered thirty, with seventeen lodges of the C.S.P.S., two lodges of the I.O.O.F., three of the Society of Taborites, two of the Bohemian American Foresters, one sokol, and the freethought society *Svobodná Obec*.

⁷³ Čapek, *The Čechs (Bohemians) in America*, pp. 167-69.

⁷⁴ "One Hundred Years," p. 83.

⁷⁵ "One Hundred Years," p. 83.

⁷⁶ This summary is drawn from *Centennial*, pp. 53-73.

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The Second Quarter-Century (1902-1927)

Many of the activities of the second quarter century paralleled those of the first including 1000 Bohemian Crowns to assist flood victims in Bohemia, \$1,000.00 to the Bohemian Freethought Federation of America, and \$1,000.00 to the Bohemian Freethought School Association in Chicago (fourteen schools with 1,600 students).⁷⁷ The association donated to a variety of building funds for fraternal organizations--\$1,000.00 to the Sokol Slavsky in Cicero, \$100.00 for The Bohemian National Hall on Cicero and North Avenues, \$300.00 to Sokol Havlicek-Tyrs. It loaned \$5,000.00 for the rebuilding of C.S.P.S. School Hall at 18th and May Streets, as "a token of gratitude" to the organization that had "afforded the greatest financial assistance" in the first days of the cemetery. In 1909, it adopted a Resolution of Indignation condemning the execution in Spain of Francisco Ferrer, a leader of the Free Thinker's movement.

The association also made the first of many demonstrations of immigrant patriotism when it approved the request of Bohemian American Camp Number 30 of the Spanish American War Veterans for a donation of a site for a monument to war veterans, then contributed \$500.00 toward the cost of the monument.

As with the entire Czech-American community, freethought and Roman Catholic alike, the cemetery association was particularly active and generous during World War I seeking to ameliorate the suffering of both soldiers and civilians, but also in pursuit of their dream of a free and democratic homeland. It donated \$100.00 to the Včelky Society for amenities for Czechoslovak volunteers in American armed forces, \$3,000.00 to the American Red Cross, \$300.00 to the Czechoslovakia Relief Committee, and \$5,000.00 to the Bohemian National Alliance in support of the liberation of Czechoslovakia. Its Liberty Bond purchases totaled \$550,000.00.

Postwar donations were similarly generous--\$500.00 to the Hoover Relief Committee for aid to children in Europe, \$500.00 to relief organizations in Czechoslovakia (distributed by the cemetery president during a visit), \$100.00 for a monument to Woodrow Wilson for Prague, and a loan of \$10,000.00 to the Bohemian American Sokol Federation (for which it eventually voted to forego interest) to establish a program of food relief for the new Republic of Czechoslovakia.⁷⁸

Membership organizations for the second quarter-century included nine new members and the termination of two, for a total of thirty-seven, including twenty lodges of the C.S.P.S., two of the I.O.O.F., and the Svobodná Obec.

The Third Quarter-Century (1927-1952)

The third quarter-century of the cemetery included the Great Depression, which the association survived by considerable, careful financial navigation through bank closing and moratoriums--protecting over

⁷⁷ This summary is drawn from *Centennial*, pp. 99-106.

⁷⁸ *Centennial*, p. 85.

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\$1,000,000.00 in assets. One notable donation was \$1,000.00 to Svobodná Obec (Congregation of Bohemian Free Thinkers) to begin broadcasting the Rationalist Radio Hour (later the Czechoslovak Radio Hour); by 1977, the donations totaled approximately \$60,000.00.⁷⁹

The association also responded to political events. After the German armed forces leveled the Czech town of Lidice in June of 1942, dispersing women and children and murdering men, the association contributed to a memorial for Stern Park, Illinois, a comparable community that was renamed Lidice. It also installed a smaller memorial, an urn with dirt from the town, in its crematorium. Also in June of 1947, the association installed there an urn containing ashes and soil from the Oswescim (Auszitz) concentration camp, memorializing its victims, including members of Czech sokols. (This was stolen in the 1970s.) Responding to the domination of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union after World War II, the association took an equally strong anti-communist stance requesting, in 1950, that each delegate sign a declaration declaring that they were not a member of Communist Party, not a believer in the Communist ideology, and not a member or supporter of any subversive organization.

And with great ceremony, the association laid to rest the remains of Anton Cermak, the first Czech-born mayor of Chicago and a life-long supporter of the cemetery. Following his assassination in February of 1933, his funeral entourage proceeded from City Hall, to Chicago Stadium for final services, to Bohemian National Cemetery, where he was interred in the Cermak family mausoleum. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, for whom the fatal bullet was meant, on the occasion of an official visit to the Chicago World's Fair in October of 1933, placed a wreath at the mausoleum.

The official record of donation by the association for this twenty-five year period is impressive, especially in light of the Depression. The details reveal continuing support for the Republic of Czechoslovakia and the Czech-American community in Chicago:

General Support

Alliance of Czech Freethought Schools and individual Czech Schools	\$ 94,250.00
Bohemian Home for the Aged	81,500.00
Czechoslovak Rationalist Radio Hour	11,750.00
Czechoslovak Rationalist Federation American	7,350.00
Sokol Organization, DTJ, ADS, and Slovak Sokol (all purposes)	16,030.00
Bohemian Charitable Association	3,050.00
Slovak American Charitable Association	925.00
Council of Higher Education	800.00
Svobodna Obec (for Jan Hus Hall and "Svojan")	4,200.00

⁷⁹ This summary is drawn from *Centennial*, pp. 177-239.

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Various Czech Halls	8,250.00
Anniversary donations to member organizations	1,075.00
Advertising allocations to member organizations	22,200.00
Various organizations (donations, program ads, ticket purchases, etc.)	12,500.00
Flood Relief Donations	2,000.00
General Advertising Allocations	40,105.00

Support of War Effort, Movement for Liberation of Czechoslovakia, etc.:

Czech National Alliance	10,625.00
Czechoslovak Red Cross	1,700.00
Czechoslovak Division, American Red Cross	200.00
American Red Cross	3,150.00
United Service Organization	1,000.00
Community War Fund of Greater Chicago	500.00
American Relief for Czechoslovakia	1,350.00
Czechoslovak Refugee Committee in England	1,000.00
Miscellaneous	125.00

Total **\$ 325,365.00**

Member organizations, in 1952, numbered thirty-seven, including twenty-six lodges of the Czechoslovak Society of America (the C.S.A., which had absorbed the lodges of the C.S.P.S.), two lodges of the I.O.O.F., Svobodna Obec, and the Bohemian American Cremation Society.

The Fourth Quarter-Century (1952-1977)

The years leading to the centennial celebration of 1977 continued the pattern of activity established over the previous seventy-five. The history published in conjunction with this celebration contains the most detailed account of the association's charitable donations ever, a remarkable snapshot of not only its priorities, but also the state of free-thinking Czech Chicago:

National Organizations

Alliance of Czech Freethought Schools	\$ 50,000.00
Bohemian Charitable Association	1,800.00
Bohemian Home for the Aged	50,000.00
Council of Higher Education	2,400.00
Czech National Alliance	2,300.00
Czechoslovak National Council of America	4,200.00
Czechoslovak Rationalist Federation	6,250.00

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Slovak American Charitable Assn.	2,500.00
Sub Total	119,450.00

Other Organizations, etc.

Czechoslovak Rationalist Radio Hour	6,000.00
Social Club of Czech Americans	450.00
Donations to Halls in lieu of rent for meetings	6,250.00
Donations for Janitorial Services	575.00
Svornost - Advertising and Almanac	2,625.00
Hlasatel - Advertising and Almanac	3,625.00
Czechoslovak Legionnaires	300.00
CSA Dramatic and Glee Clubs, etc.	310.00
Funeral Services Assn. Directory	1,500.00
Swedish Covenant Hospital Directory	50.00
T. G. Masaryk School Building Fund	200.00
Sub Total	21,885.00

Czech Freethought Schools

Jan Neruda	1,250.00
Vojta Naprstek	850.00
Alois Jirasek	1,250.00
T. G. Masaryk	1,250.00
Brookfield	1,050.00
Jaroslav Vrchlicky	1,050.00
Karel Havlicek	1,250.00
Jan Amos Komensky	250.00
Husuv Dum	100.00
Jan Hus	700.00
Besidka and Detska Opatrovna	1,150.00
Sub Total	10,350.00

American Sokol Organization

Sokol Chicago	800.00
Sokol Havlicek-Tyrs	1,400.00
Sokol Slavsky	1,700.00
Sokol Berwyn	1,700.00
Sokol Tabor	1,700.00
Sokol Rozvoj	550.00

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Sokol Americky	650.00
Sokol Brookfield	1,700.00
Sokol Stickney	1,700.00
Sokol Town of Lake	800.00
Sokol Cechie	800.00
Sokol Pilsen	200.00
Sokol West Suburban	1,300.00
Sub Total	15,000.00
 Publicity and Advertising	
Member Organizations - 37 at 2,500.00	92,500.00
1 st Czechoslovak Garden Club	2,225.00
Svobodna Skola	5,000.00
Vek Rozumu	6,100.00
CSA Journal	2,500.00
JCDP, Voice of the Unity	2,400.00
Cesky Odd Fellow	2,650.00
Sokol Americky	2,500.00
Sub Total	115,875.00
 Total	 282,560.00

After adding donations from the previous seventy-five years and estimating other donations and allocations, of amounts not specified in the association's records, the author of the centennial history stated:

In all, therefore, the Bohemian National Cemetery Association, as it commemorates its Centennial, can look back with great pride on the fact that it has carried out the mandate of its Charter for the support of Czech and Slovak organizations and their activities to the extent of more than \$750,000.00, three quarters of a million dollars.

He added: "This is a record no other Czech or Slovak organization in America can match."⁸⁰

The Landscape Design and Development

The Benes Landscape Design

The cemetery association acquired and developed the grounds incrementally. Originally, fifty flat, wooded acres in two separate lots east of Pulaski Road were purchased for a total of \$10,000. These constitute the

⁸⁰ *Centennial*, pp. 461-463.

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southeastern part of the cemetery. According to the association history, "the land, lying along the north branch of the Chicago River, between Bowmanville and Jefferson, was well forested with good approach roads, and the neighboring residents themselves built a road from the river bridge to the cemetery grounds."⁸¹ Subsequently, the association president, Matthew Karasek, purchased ten lowland acres along the Chicago River for \$2,000.00, leaving the association with forty acres of land. The first two burials were hastily arranged (and haphazardly sited) on advice of counsel, in order to thwart legal challenges to the cemetery's founding. The first public funeral, of Mrs. Anna Hubacek, was held on November 1, 1877. A special site was selected from ten acres tentatively allocated for grave sites according to a plan drawn free of charge by John V. Benes, then a delegate to the association, later the superintendent of the cemetery.⁸²

A building contractor by trade, Benes did the most to shape the character of the cemetery, when he laid out this original section. Early in 1878, the association commissioned him to survey the land for the purpose of laying out roads and sections for lots and graves. According to the association history, many trees were cut to situate the roads, and a number of graves in their paths were relocated--at the association's expense. Simultaneously, the association erected a six-foot fence around the property and built a fifty-foot wide access road from Bowmanville Road--on part of the land previously sold to Matt Karasek, which he had deeded back to the Association.⁸³

Benes' landscape plan (Figure 1) seems prosaic at a glance—a grid of north/south and east/west roads whose only virtue appears to be to lock the cemetery design into the larger grid-plan of the Chicago area. Certainly it does not follow the major trends in cemetery design in the United States in the nineteenth century. According to James J. Farrell:

Between 1830 and 1920, Americans developed new burial grounds to express their new conceptions of themselves, their society, the environment and death. The development of the modern cemetery occurred in two stages. In the first stage, between 1830 and 1855, the "rural" or "garden" cemetery predominated. During this period, the development of the cemetery proceeded in tandem with the development of the profession of landscape architecture and the public parks movement. In the second stage, the "lawn" or "park" cemetery prevailed.⁸⁴

Boston's 1831 Mount Auburn Cemetery established the model for the former. It was designed "to offer an example of landscape or picturesque gardening in conformity to the modern style of laying out grounds."⁸⁵

⁸¹ *Centennial*, p. 49.

⁸² *Centennial*, p. 51.

⁸³ *Centennial*, p. 55.

⁸⁴ James J. Farrell, *Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830-1920*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980, pp. 99-100.

⁸⁵ Farrell, p. 103.

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According to the style's chief promoter in the United States, Andrew Jackson Downing, a picturesque landscape featured "striking, irregular, spirited forms." Incorporating natural scenery and winding roads, it contrasted with the artificial architecture and grid-patterned streets of the city. Downing promoted the style in his books *Landscape Gardening* of 1841 and *Cottage Residences* of 1892, and during a stint as editor of the journal *Horticulturalist* that began in 1846.⁸⁶ As he noted, the idea of the rural cemetery "took the public mind by storm." Laurel Hill in Philadelphia (1836) and Green-Wood in New York (1838) followed, and by 1861, at least sixty-six garden cemeteries dotted the United States.⁸⁷

A rural cemetery was meant to encourage survivors to revisit the gravesites, where its beauties would divert attention from the deceased to the setting of burial, and thereby nurture emotional and aesthetic sensibilities. It offered opportunities for contemplation and "the sentiment of retrospection" in the solemn sanctuary of "Nature's inner court," but not simply on an individual basis.⁸⁸ As Farrell notes: "Just as the family was the central unit of civil society, so also would it be the organizational unit of the rural cemetery." He quoted early promotional literature of Mount Auburn: "Whatever consolation can be derived from the gathering together of members of the same families, is provided for by the appropriation of lots each sufficient for a family."⁸⁹

According to Farrell, rural cemetery design dominated the middle third of the nineteenth century, but was surpassed by the lawn or park cemetery in the last decades of the century. The success of the picturesque rural cemetery model stimulated the movement for public parks and the profession of landscape architecture, which, in an interesting cycle, turned around to spark the move to the lawn cemetery. After Downing's death, his former partner, Calvert Vaux, joined with Frederick Law Olmstead, in 1857, to design Central Park in New York City, with its "Greensward" design that stressed the broad, sweeping beauties of an open lawn. It has been called "an essay in Downing's Beautiful Style" adapted for public park use, and it established the style as the foundation of American landscape architecture.⁹⁰

This approach to park planning spread almost simultaneously to cemeteries, most notably in Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, in 1855, which established the type.⁹¹ An open, airy landscape was now the ideal, and a predetermined plan took precedence over individual preferences. The latter was at the expense of a tradition of the rural cemetery type, which allowed individual families to enclose and embellish their lot. Control of the lots fell to superintendents, who sought a unified look for the broad expanse of lawn by leveling grave mounds, eliminating fences, discouraging large-scale monuments, and even, without success, attempting to have all

⁸⁶ Farrell, p. 112.

⁸⁷ Farrell, pp. 111-112.

⁸⁸ Farrell, pp. 104-109.

⁸⁹ Farrell, p. 106-107.

⁹⁰ Farrell, p. 113.

⁹¹ Farrell, p. 113.

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grave markers set flat into the lawn.⁹² Farrell quotes a cemetery superintendent from St. Louis: "the improvement in cemeteries must be conducted under one general plan dictated by educated taste. Individual rights must be subordinate to this general plan... Civilization consists in subordinating the will of the individual to the comfort and well being of all. The subordination so necessary in the walks of life is equally requisite in the habitations of the dead."⁹³ A concern for beautiful views and natural vistas often involved a disdain for the landscape at hand, for example, a lake with an irregular (and thus "natural") shoreline might be dug into a low portion of a dry landscape.

One of the most notable aspects of Benes' design for Bohemian National Cemetery is its lack of correspondence to either of these types. This resulted not from ignorance, since there were examples of each on hand in Chicago, but from the awareness that his cemetery would have a significantly different function from the norm, and that neither popular model would suit it. In drawing up the plat of the grounds and roads, Benes carefully provided for three circular areas, each approximately twenty to thirty feet in diameter, all in a precise relationship to the main road and main gate (Number 1 on the map), and all designated for special, public uses.

In fact, Benes' design principles anticipate, on a modest scale, those of the designers of the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893, the City Beautiful movement that followed on its heels, and Daniel Burnham in his Plan of Chicago of 1909. This aesthetic, derived from the classicism and formal grandeur of Beaux Arts principles and Baron Haussmann's plan for Paris, involved a commitment to hierarchy and order, with various civic buildings clearly related to one another and the spaces in-between. According to Daniel Bluestone, "The stateliness of City Beautiful plans depended on architectural unity, harmony, and control. The aesthetic power of the whole center, with its extensive plazas and patterns of hierarchy between buildings, was intended to appear greater than the sum of individual buildings and spaces. He added: "The power and presence of the City Beautiful plans relied on architecturally harmonious ensembles of buildings.... The plans exuded a control and unity that extended from single buildings and groups of buildings outward along axes created by new radial streets and boulevards."⁹⁴ According to Normand Patton, an early proponent of the style in Chicago, "art should predominate over nature and symmetry take precedence over picturesqueness.... The buildings will not be in the park; the park will be in the inclosure (sic) of the buildings."⁹⁵

Making appropriate adjustments for the scale and function of the cemetery, its features unfolded on Benes' grid according to these principles. The widest road, from the Gatehouse (Figure 11b, map Number 1), called the main or national road, to the circle that became the Civil War Veterans Memorial (Figure 6, map Number 9), forms the main axis of the scheme, in effect, a boulevard. Along it are situated the plaque honoring the first

⁹² Farrell, pp. 120.

⁹³ Farrell, pp. 118.

⁹⁴ Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 183-185.

⁹⁵ Bluestone, p. 187.

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burial in the cemetery (map Number 7) and the circle that became the monument to the veterans of WWI and WWII (Figure 2, map Number 2). The Mother monument (Figure 8, map Number 4) and the crematory building (Figure 13a, map Number 5) open at a right angle to the south of this axis; the Odd Fellows monument (Figure 9, map Number 8) is directly to the north of the memorial plaque. The administration building (Figure 12a, map Number 3) and the main gate sit on a line along Pulaski Road; the third circle, now Klacel Circle (Figure 5, map Number 11), is on a secondary axis leading north from the World War memorial. The "Park" (Figure 3), a rectangular section preserved as open space for public use, has the Civil War and Odd Fellows monuments at two of its corners and the memorial plaque at a third.

But an important conception underlying the City Beautiful movement is at work here as well, the well-designed urban space was foremost a community space. According to this notion, in the civic center, the appropriate experience was not solitary reflection, but an awareness of an individual's membership in a larger society. Bluestone writes, "The City Beautiful's aesthetic unity cultivated the power of metaphor in attempting to suggest common civic purpose and shared public institutions" and "[t]he vision of thousands of citizens gathering on public grounds to share commonly held institutions guided many City Beautiful plans." In conjunction with the latter, he quoted Daniel Burnham from the Plan of Chicago, on parks and promenades as the "place of the people...the place of great gatherings either festive or serious in nature; the place of parades and reviews of national and civic bodies."⁹⁶

The official histories of the Bohemian National Cemetery tell of just such communal celebrations. Sixteen millimeter films, taken after World War I and still in the possession of the board of directors, show that these celebrations included parades through the gatehouse, along Benes' main axis, under a canopy of elm trees (since blighted and removed), to the Park and the Civil War Monument, where the ceremonies commenced (Figure 3). If the rural cemeteries were designed for the family unit, this space is clearly intended to accommodate the ceremonies of entire free-thinking portion of the Czech community in Chicago.

The founding ceremony of September 7, 1877, set the tone: four thousand members of the Bohemian community gathered in Pilsen, paraded to the train station with Captain Prokop Hudek as grand marshal, boarded twenty-five cars that delivered them to the Irving Park station, reformed the parade, and, led by a band, marched to the cemetery grounds. Frantisek Zdrubek delivered the principal and dedication address.⁹⁷ For one dedication ceremony (for a storage vault) at the second anniversary celebration on July 21, 1878, thirty organizations paraded in six sections from various parts of the city to the North Western Railroad station, where two special trains were filled for the trip to the Irving Park station. Here the parade reformed and marched to the cemetery grounds, again, with Captain Hudek as marshal. President Joseph Matousek delivered the introductory speech, followed by choral selections by the Czech Singing Society Lyra, with Zdrubek again as the principal speaker. For the annual celebration of July 1891, forty-four railroad coaches were required to

⁹⁶ Bluestone, p. 183, 188.

⁹⁷ *Centennial*, p. 45.

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carry people attending.⁹⁸ In fact, the twin ideals of civic celebration and private contemplation were occasionally at odds; the association published a notice in Bohemian newspapers requesting societies holding picnics in the cemetery not to allow bands to play between noon and 2:00 P.M. on Sundays, when funerals and other private ceremonies were commonly conducted.⁹⁹

The fiftieth anniversary celebration was held at the cemetery on Sunday, August 21, 1927. Invitations were extended to Mayor William Hale Thompson and the City Council of Chicago; to the Cook County Board and its President, Anton J. Cermak; and to the Mayors and Presidents of suburban towns and cities with significant Czech populations. In attendance were 25,000 Czechoslovaks of the Chicago metropolitan area. A parade was formed at the Bohemian Old People's Home and Orphan Asylum, led by marshal Charles J. Kopecky and superintendents Bastyr and Parizek, with Vaclav Husa conducting the band.¹⁰⁰ On June 24, 1933, the day preceding the Slet of the Federation of Czechoslovak Sokols in America at Soldier Field, the participants visited the cemetery to pay tribute to the memory of Anton Cermak. Jan Siman and Joseph Placek, past Presidents of the American Sokol Organization, and Gustav Marshall Petrovsky, former President of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol participated. A parade led by a twenty-piece band formed at the Bohemian Old People's Home and marched to the speaker's platform. The English speaker of the program was Dr. E. E. Novak of New Prague, Minnesota, with Czech and Slovak speakers representing the Sokols.¹⁰¹

Besides these special ceremonies, annual Memorial Day commemorations were held on the cemetery grounds at the Park and the Civil War Veterans Memorial Monument. The first was on May 29, 1892, when the monument was dedicated. Typically a parade would form at the C.S.P.S. School Hall on 18th and May Streets, proceed west to Ashland Avenue, then south to Cermak Road, where the marchers would board street cars to the Bohemian Home for the Aged, where the parade would regroup and march to the cemetery. Beginning in 1920, a parade of veterans units would march from the Lawndale-Crawford Post No. 98, American Legion, on Kedzie Avenue and 24th Street, to 26th Street and Pulaski Road, where street cars would be boarded to the Bohemian Home for the Aged. There the veterans group joined the civilian groups assembled at the home for a joint parade to the cemetery. From 1938 on, all groups, veterans and civilian, formed at the home for the aged and from there paraded to the cemetery grounds.¹⁰²

During the period from 1918 through 1952, the list of Memorial Day speakers included City and County Judges, Cook County States Attorneys; Attorneys General of the State of Illinois; U.S. District Attorneys; Mayors of Chicago, Cicero and Berwyn; State Representatives and United States Congressmen. Among the Czech speakers were national officers of several Czechoslovak fraternal societies, Sokol organizations, Consuls

⁹⁸ *Centennial*, pp. 55, 61.

⁹⁹ *Centennial*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁰ *Centennial*, p. 89.

¹⁰¹ *Centennial*, p. 199.

¹⁰² *Centennial*, p. 41.

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of Czechoslovakia, and outstanding community leaders. Children of the Bohemian Old People's Home and Orphan Asylum participated in the programs by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and Czech poems. The President of the Association served as Master of Ceremonies of the civilian program, which was followed by military services conducted by representatives of various veteran organizations.¹⁰³

It is notable that these public ceremonies revolved around the monuments that occupy crucial points on Benes' grid. In his discussion of civic planning in Chicago, Bluestone notes the role that public monuments played in City Beautiful design schemes:

Equally important elements within the City Beautiful aesthetic were numerous statues and monuments conceived as focal points for civic spaces....Statues and monuments, both heroic and allegorical, reinforced and restated the conservative social ideals of the City Beautiful....Although they, too, were mere fragments of an idealized civic landscape, statues and monuments importantly complimented the City Beautiful's enthusiasm for civic unity....¹⁰⁴

He quotes the claim of a sponsor of a fund-raising campaign that a monument could "inoculate other generations with the same spirit of patriotism, valor, and devotion which gendered the events it commemorates....It will ever prompt a childhood to noble efforts as it discloses to their gaze the possibilities of a citizen under their Republican Institutions."¹⁰⁵ The generations of Czech-Americans who commissioned public monuments for the cemetery obviously shared these notions using the monuments and their ceremonies to promote and preserve Czech culture and values and immigrant patriotism.

Expansion

The first expansion of the cemetery was initiated in 1884, when a committee received authorization to purchase ten additional acres in the immediate vicinity, in the belief that more land would soon be required. The purchase, for \$6,000.00, was approved in March of 1889. In March of 1890, the Board of trustees submitted plans drafted by two engineers, Greeley and Carlson, for new sections and roads in the eastern part of the cemetery. Construction of an eighty by four hundred foot pond began in September of 1894.¹⁰⁶ In June of 1897, the first section adjoining the new pond was opened. In December of 1900, the association purchased ten acres of land adjoining the cemetery at a cost of \$750.00 per acre. By August 31, 1902, the 25th anniversary of the Bohemian National Cemetery, the Association owned sixty acres of land, with 21.7 acres of lots, 13.2 acres of roads, 5.9 acres occupied by buildings, 9.2 acres under development, and 10.0 acres undeveloped.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ *Centennial*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁴ Bluestone, p. 191.

¹⁰⁵ Bluestone, p. 193.

¹⁰⁶ *Centennial*, pp. 58, 61, 62.

¹⁰⁷ *Centennial*, pp. 63, 65, 66.

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In December of 1902, the association purchased sixty and one-eighth acres of land immediately north of the cemetery for \$60,000.00. With that expansion, a new map of the cemetery (Figure 4) was drawn by August Petrtyl.¹⁰⁸ The centennial history of the cemetery contains a reproduction of the map (Figure 4). It does not show this northern section, but twelve new sections laid out to the east and southeast of the original Benes plat. Amongst them are three small triangular areas, apparently set aside for future public monuments. One, to the north, later became the site of the Spanish-American War memorial (Figure 7, map Number 10). Petrtyl, born in Bohemia in 1887, was a classically trained artist and illustrator who owned a decorating firm in Chicago. He died in Chicago in 1937.¹⁰⁹ It is likely that he designed this section of the cemetery, as well as drew up the map. However, the layout of this area is significantly different from the original one. The design with its curvilinear roads and organically shaped lots seems, at first glance, at odds with the rigid geometry of Benes' Beaux-Arts inspired design. However, the designer integrated the two schemes by continuing each east/west road of the original plan into the newly developed zone. He perhaps knew one of the finest example of the new, organic, suburb design--Olmstead and Vaux's Chicago suburb of Riverside of 1868. In fact, the layout of the eastern and southern portions of Bohemian National Cemetery resemble the design of Riverside very closely, no doubt because of the great similarity of function with curving roads outlining individual lots, but for gravesites rather than houses.

In 1905, the association commissioned Jens Jensen, of the Chicago park system, to prepare plans for the new northern acreage, in order "to provide a pleasing appearance." The survey submitted was approved in March, 1906, along with a payment of \$600.00.¹¹⁰ Jensen, one of the premier horticulturalists and park designers in early twentieth-century Chicago, had an agrarian background and an education in the folk schools of his native Denmark that instilled in him a sympathy for native scenery and local culture.¹¹¹ He shared with Olmsted a vocabulary of naturalistic design and a goal of bringing the urban population into closer contact with nature. As Frank Lloyd Wright, George Grant Elmslie, and William Purcell developed a style of architecture inspired by the Illinois prairie, so Jensen developed a landscape style in harmony with its flatness and subtle beauty. It featured open, naturalistic designs and native plants.¹¹² As chief landscape architect and general superintendent of Chicago's West Park District, and later as the head of the district, he prepared new plans for two major, partially built, components of the Chicago park system first laid out by William LeBaron Jenney in the late nineteenth century--the 185 acre Garfield Park and the 180 acre Douglas Park. He designed the 144 acre Columbus Park, near the suburb of Oak Park; the Lincoln Memorial Park in Springfield, Illinois; and

¹⁰⁸ Jaroslave E. S. Vojan, *The Semi-centennial Jubilee of the Bohemian National Cemetery Association in Chicago, Illinois*, Chicago: Bohemian National Cemetery Association, 1927, p. 70.

¹⁰⁹ Falk, Peter H., ed., *Who Was Who in American Art*, 3 vols., Madison, Conn., 1999, p. 3724.

¹¹⁰ *Centennial*, p. 78.

¹¹¹ Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*, New York: Harry Abrams, Inc., 2001, pp. 427-428.

¹¹² Rogers, p. 428.

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smaller neighborhood parks, all under 8.5 acres, in Chicago.¹¹³

But between a stint as chief landscape architect of the West Park District, and one as district head, Jensen was dismissed for refusing to countenance the graft rampant in the district.¹¹⁴ Thus, his design for the northern section of Bohemian National Cemetery would have been done during this period of private work between 1900 and 1906. With no documentation of Jensen's contribution to the cemetery beyond the record of the cemetery association's meetings, and with only the current map to judge it by, it is difficult to determine whether he simply laid out the roads and lots of the new section or intervened more extensively in the landscape. Because of the similarities between the designs of the eastern addition and Jensen's northern acres (Figure 1), it seems that he attempted to follow the general scheme of the former in order ensure a consistency of style for all of the outer portions of the cemetery. Again, the design with curvilinear roads and organically shaped lots contrasts to the grid of Benes' design. Mimicking the 1902 plat, Jensen integrated the two schemes by continuing each north/south of the original plan into his newly developed zones.

However incongruous the first and the later two schemes appear, there is a larger, more conceptual consistency to the additions. Farrell has noted the correspondence between the rural cemetery and the modern suburb; the cemetery was an analogue to the suburb, which removed the place of residence from the urban core. As he notes, "The suburb served as a rural retreat, a place of rest, for bourgeois urban workers and their families; the cemetery was the final resting place for the same people. Both suburbs and cemeteries featured natural scenery and winding roads that contrasted the artificial architecture and grid-patterned streets of the cities."¹¹⁵ Again, Jensen, like Petrtyl, probably knew of Olmstead and Vaux's design for Riverside, Illinois, and recognized the appropriateness of surrounding Benes' formal, "urban" core with a picturesque "suburban" fringe.

Thus, in a sense, Petrtyl and Jensen's outer cemetery sections play "suburb" to Benes' "urban" civic core. That civic inner portion is as much a public space for the ceremonies of a vital community as a private space for the deceased and their mourners. But as the landscape moves beyond this central section, it promotes the type of quiet, solitary meditation for which rural and park cemeteries were intended. Thus, Bohemian National Cemetery, with its double design, is one of the most complete statements of a burial ground as necropolis--city of the dead, rather than cemetery (from the Greek *kymiterion*, place of sleep)--although simultaneously, and at its center, it is a place for the living community as much as the dead.

¹¹³ Rogers, pp. 428-429.

¹¹⁴ Leonard K. Eaton, *Landscape Artist in America: The Life and Work of Jens Jensen*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964, pp. 29-30.

¹¹⁵ Farrell, pp. 110.

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Final Changes to the Site

The northern tract was the last acquisition of land for the cemetery. In light of the continued demand for lots, the association did consider, but ultimately rejected, a proposal to purchase land north of Bryn Mawr Avenue, a decision which it later regretted. The property became the Chicago Tuberculosis Sanitarium. Association documents record an opportunity to purchase the seventy-acre Chicago Parental School property immediately to the east (now the site of Northeastern Illinois University).¹¹⁶ They also record a recommendation by the cemetery board made in September of 1940, that the association purchase seventy acres at an unnamed site, but no doubt the school property at \$6,500.00 per acre. For reasons unknown, no further action was taken. Proposals were also raised, but ultimately rejected, for the purchase of additional land in Elk Grove, Downer's Grove, and Addison and at four different entire cemeteries--Clarendon Hills Cemetery, Green Ridge Memorial Cemetery, Mount Auburn Cemetery, and a fourth, unnamed.¹¹⁷

Instead, the cemetery continued to develop its own property, making an additional 2,000 lots available.¹¹⁸ Yet another section in the sixty-acre northern tract was opened in November of 1914. Of the sections opened here, number sixteen has unusual historical significance; it was prepared to receive the victims of what is known in Chicago as the *Eastland* Disaster. The *Eastland*, an excursion steamer, was chartered on July 24, 1915, by Western Electric Company for a lake cruise for its employees. While docked in the Chicago River, it capsized when a large number of people rushed to the river side of the ship to view passing boats. The event resulted in the deaths of 850 people, many of them Bohemians—so many, in fact, that almost the entire section was sold for their burials.¹¹⁹

A local, Czech-born architect named Anton F. Rusy was commissioned in 1918 to design a new plan for the cemetery in anticipation of the construction of a barn and greenhouses. No plans have survived from this project, but judging from the wording of the association's account, it involved only the siting of various new buildings.¹²⁰ Minor improvements to the cemetery grounds followed--a retaining wall was built along the north bank of the Chicago River; the area around the Mother Statue was planted with grass and shrubbery in March of 1935; an undeveloped strip of property along Foster Avenue was planted with shrubs and trees; and the southwest corner of the cemetery was cleaned and landscaped.¹²¹

In 1936, the Cook County Department of Highways negotiated with the association for the acquisition of a fifty-foot wide strip of cemetery property from Hamlin Avenue to Pulaski Road, one-half of the footage required for a project to widen Foster Avenue. The County Highway Department offered, and the association

¹¹⁶ *Centennial*, p. 103.

¹¹⁷ *Centennial*, pp. 99-105.

¹¹⁸ *Centennial*, p. 105.

¹¹⁹ *Centennial*, p. 81.

¹²⁰ *Centennial*, p. 83.

¹²¹ *Centennial*, p. 115.

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accepted, \$12,398.25 in compensation--\$8,350.00 for the land and \$4,408.25 for the removal of certain buildings, for construction of a 1,287 foot fence, and for the replacement of trees and shrubbery. This transaction required the Filliung Monument Company, which leased a portion of this land, to relocate to the north.¹²² In October of 1963, a new section, number thirty-five, north of the Mausoleum, was laid out in the same manner as section twenty-six, south of the Mausoleum, "for uniformity of appearance."¹²³ In June of 1972, a ninety-day notice to vacate the 100 by 100 foot lot on the northeast corner of Pulaski Road and Foster Avenue was served on the Filliung Monument Company. A removal order followed upon the company's failure to vacate. With the closing of the monument company the landscaping of this corner, the last significant change to the cemetery property, proceeded in July of 1974 (placing it outside of the period of significance). Bids were requested for the landscaping of the area and the erection of a monument; Stonecraft Industries was selected at a contracted cost of \$6,047.00 for the wall-like monument bearing the inscription "Until the Break of Day." Landscaping, including trees, shrubs, flowers, and grass furnished by the association, was awarded to delegate Frank Diblik, for a cost of \$7,198.24.¹²⁴

In the most recent change to the grounds, the cemetery association sold the small, narrow southern portion beyond the Chicago River to the city of Chicago. Undeveloped, it contained only a warehouse and repair shop that has been razed to make way for the city park planned for the site.

The Public Monuments

Introduction

There are six major public monuments in Bohemian National Cemetery from the period of significance--the Ladimir Klacel Monument, the Civil War Veterans Monument, the United Spanish War Veterans Memorial, the Mother Monument, the Odd Fellows Monument, and the World War I and II Memorial. All except the Spanish War Veterans Memorial occupy significant points on the original Benes plat of the cemetery, reinforcing the public and civic nature of this space. As a group, they reflect the core values of the cemetery association, the member organizations, and the Czech-American community in Chicago--ethnic pride and heritage, immigrant patriotism and values, fraternal solidarity, and freethought.

The Ladimir Klacel Monument

The Ladimir Klacel Monument (Figure 5, map Number 11) occupies the center of Klacel Circle. It consists of a tall geometric granite pedestal, square in plan, with a tapered and chamfered shaft. This holds a white marble portrait bust of Klacel, with its own pedestal, in the Classical Revival style popularized by Hiram Powers, Thomas Crawford, and other American sculptors who had worked in marble. The bust is now heavily weathered. It was erected by the Klacel Monument Association from donations by friends and contemporaries

¹²² *Centennial*, p. 129.

¹²³ *Centennial*, p. 338.

¹²⁴ *Centennial*, pp. 367-368.

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of Frantisek Matous Klacel, a Bohemian patriot and philosopher. Born on April 7, 1808, at Česká Třebova in Bohemia, he taught philosophy and championed Czech nationalism at the Augustinian Friars School at Brno, Moravia, until expelled by the Austrian government on charges of political radicalism. He arrived in America in 1869 (where he adopted the name Laditnr), became a leader in the Czech Rationalist and Freethought movement, and died on March 17, 1882 (at Belle Plaine, Iowa, where he was buried).¹²⁵

The monument was dedicated on July 26, 1885. The Bohemian paper *Svornost* noted that as "Americans are mourning the loss of their President Ulysses S. Grant, Chicago is wrapped in deep sorrow. The procession at Bohemian National Cemetery marched without a band, and only the muted sound of muffled drums, so that the local American newspaper would not scold the Bohemians for having no sentiment and regard for their American co-citizens."¹²⁶ Speakers of the day included Frank B. Zdrubek, President of the Klacel Monument Association, and a Mr. Zbanek of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Chairman of the Committee which had erected a Klacel Monument in Belle Plaine, Iowa, in 1884. The ceremony was concluded by the placing of memorials and documents into the cornerstone by Chicago area Czech-American societies. The perimeter of Klacel Circle is the burial place of significant Czech-American leaders, including Frank Boucek (1881-1944) to the north, Dr. Antonin Mueller (1863-1947) west, Vaclav Pohl (1817-1893) northeast, Dr. Anton Radesinsky (1867-1936) northwest, Robert H. Vickers (1830-1897) east, and Frantisek B. Zdrubek (1842-1911)--the guiding force for the founding of the cemetery--to the south.

To design the monument, and to carve the white marble bust of Klacel that is the focal point of the circle, the monument association members, with characteristic pride in their heritage, chose the Czech sculptor Frantisek Hess. Born in 1847, in the eastern Bohemian town of Luze, he studied at a school of sculpture at Olomouc. After the Prussian-Austrian War of 1865, on the invitation of his younger brother, already in Buffalo, New York, Hess moved there in June of 1866, before continuing on by train to Chicago in 1867. He associated with the Chicago fraternal societies, including the Slovanska Lipa, and he carved a wooden six-foot tall statue, the "Goddess of Liberty" for the top of the facade of the building of the Telocvicna Jednota Sokol. In 1870, at the invitation of J. B. Mendlik, he moved to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, to work at his monument carving shop. He established his own shop in Manitowoc, then spent eight years as a partner in a monument business. Here he met the American sculptor Leonard Volk, with whom he worked on a number of busts and medallions. When the Bohemian National Cemetery opened in 1877, he moved to Chicago and opened a monument business opposite the cemetery. After ten years he sold his business and moved to Redlands, California, where he bought an orange grove. In 1921, he retired to Riverside, California.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ *Centennial*, p. 29.

¹²⁶ Paul Nemecek, "Bohemian National Cemetery of Chicago," *Kořeň: Journal of the Slovak American Genealogy Society of Illinois*, vol. 6 no. 2 (Winter 2002), p. 3.

¹²⁷ Nemecek, p. 3.

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The Civil War Veterans Monument

The number of monuments in the cemetery dedicated to the valor of Czech-American soldiers has prompted the Czech-American historian Paul Nemecek to describe it as "the most patriotic cemetery in Chicago."¹²⁸ The Bohemian Soldiers and Sailors Monument (Figure 6, map Number 9), better known as the Civil War Veterans Monument, stands opposite the cemetery gate as the eastern focal point of the main road. It was built between 1889 (when the corner stone was set) and 1892 (the dedication date) by the Grand Army of the Republic at a cost of \$5,035. The G.A.R. was a Union Civil War veterans organization founded in Decatur, Illinois, in 1866. It was responsible for many of the Civil War memorials found in the cemeteries not only of Chicago, but of all of the northern states. Often, these consisted of bronzes, relief and free-standing, by anonymous artists cast from stock molds by any number of American foundries. On the bronze base of the statue, facing south, is the inscription "Gorham Mfg. Co. and Art Founders SC" and a date--1892. This is the foundry stamp of the Gorham Manufacturing Company of Providence, Rhode Island, the country's largest producer of silverware, but also specialists in the lost wax process of bronze casting. Its statues, memorials, and architectural bronze work were famous nationwide, and it was the founder for innumerable small scale and monumental bronzes around the turn of the century.¹²⁹

The pedestal of this monument is granite, with a four-tiered, rectangular base and a mid-section with a stylized classical temple façade with composite capitals, a pediment, and a garlanded frieze on each of its four sides. Above this is a rectangular base on which the monumental bronze figure is set. This is of a standing union soldier in uniform, flat cap, and opened long coat. In his proper right hand he holds, at an angle and from the barrel, a rifle with a fixed bayonet. The staff of a furled flag runs through his proper left hand, past the crook of his elbow, to his proper left foot. The records of the cemetery association do not contain the name of the sculptor of this bronze, perhaps because the project was supervised by the G.A.R. However, a survey of the hundreds of Civil War and "soldiers and sailors" monuments listed in the database of American art maintained by the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of American Art revealed no bronze statues that matched this piece. It does not appear to be a stock piece, but a relatively accomplished statue in the Beaux Arts style popularized by the American sculptors Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French, and commonly used for Civil War monuments.

It was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1892, with a great patriotic display by Czech Chicagoans. The Grand Army of the Republic marched along with the freethinker societies and the Sons of Veterans. Principal speakers included the president of the cemetery association, Joseph Matousek, who proclaimed, "We are Americans and love this new country, not only with words, but with deeds, as this monument proves."¹³⁰ Others speakers included Joseph Cermak, Editor of the *Czech Daily Svornost* and author of a Czech language *History of the Civil War*; Chicago Mayor Carter H. Harrison, Attorney William S. Elliott, Edward Harlan,

¹²⁸ Nemecek, p. 3.

¹²⁹ <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/studteaguide/RhodeIslandHistory/chapt6.html>

¹³⁰ *Centennial*, p. 29.

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Commander of the Illinois Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic; and E. R. Lewis, Grand Marshall of the Grand Army of the Republic. As part of the ceremony, more than one hundred historical documents were sealed in the cornerstone by various societies and organizations. The Czech community in Chicago was still small during the Civil War, but a bronze tablet on the monument's front lists the names of eighteen Bohemian veterans buried at the cemetery: John Fishman, Michael Hejduk, James Hlavin, Frank Hrdlicka, Prokop Hudek, Jacob Kakuska, William Kaspar, Anton Macal, M. Mitchell, Frank Schultz, Frank Smola, Frank Stejskal (Stejskal), John Talafous, John Tomek, Alois Uher, Martin Vranek, Albert Waska, Jakob Kristufek. Another Civil War veteran, Adolph B. Chladek, is also buried in the cemetery.¹³¹ The monument base bears identifying tablets in Czech and in English. Eight short posts, through which a chain was strung to surround the monument, were added in 1930.

The United Spanish War Veterans Memorial

This monument, better known as the Hiker Monument, honors the Bohemians who fought in the Spanish-American War of 1898-1902 (Figure 7, map Number 10). It was erected by Bohemian American Camp Number 30 of the United Spanish War Veterans. The cemetery association furnished the nine-foot deep concrete foundation and granted a donation of \$500.00. Additional funding was provided by Albert A. Fare of Chicago. It was dedicated on September 26, 1926, with John A. Cervenka, Purchasing Agent for the City of Chicago, as the Czech speaker, and Captain Oscar E. Caristrom, Attorney General of the State of Illinois and President of the United States War Veterans Organization, as the English speaker. The ceremony honored the forty-four Spanish-American War veterans buried at Bohemian National Cemetery at that time.¹³² A tablet on the boulder lists the names of 147 Bohemian soldiers and sailors who served in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.¹³³

The bronze sculpture depicts an American soldier in uniform and gear as worn in that War with a wide-brimmed hat, open collar, and sleeves rolled to the elbows. He holds his rifle nearly horizontally before him just below the waist, with his proper right hand near the trigger and his proper left hand on the barrel. The statue weighs 1600 pound and stands on a Red granite boulder of twenty-five tons, which was towed by a tractor twenty-four miles to a station in Wausau, Wisconsin, and shipped by rail to Chicago. Vaclav Vales, a Czech-American stoneworker, shaped the base, contrived to maintain the aspect of a natural boulder.¹³⁴ The less formal attire of the soldier and the more natural appearance of the base are appropriate for this work, the only major public cemetery monument located off the Benes grid plan and in the more picturesquely landscaped outer portion of the cemetery.

¹³¹ Nemecek, p. 3.

¹³² *Centennial*, pp. 30-31.

¹³³ Nemecek, p. 4.

¹³⁴ *Centennial*, p. 31.

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The bronze statue is the work of Theodora Ruggles Kitson (1876 -1932), one of the most prolific female bronze sculptors in America (although there is no signature or founder's mark visible). Born in Brookline, in her teens, she became the protégé of Henry Hudson Kitson, a well-known American sculptor from England. He had studied in Paris and encouraged the young Ruggles to do likewise. The two were married in Paris in 1893, and in 1899, Ruggles Kitson won honorable mention at the *Salon des Artistes Francais*. She exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and won a bronze medal at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. The Kitsons separated in 1909, and Ruggles Kitson moved to Farmington, where she maintained a studio until her death in 1932. Ruggles Kitson's allegorical and equestrian figures are found in many communities in Massachusetts. She created the monument to Thaddeus Kosciuszko, the Polish hero of the American Revolution, for the Boston Public Gardens in 1927, and a series of portrait reliefs and busts for the Vicksburg Battlefield Museum. This work was cast during the sculptor's lifetime, however the Gorham Foundry in Rhode Island, founder of this piece, owned the rights to Kitson's designs and continued to cast reproductions from the molds after the sculptor's death. The Hiker was one of the most reproduced of these works, with some fifty copies in cities across the United States.

The Mother Monument

The monument (Figure 8, map Number 4) was erected by the Bohemian National Cemetery Association and dedicated on August 21, 1927, as part of the commemoration of the Cemetery's fiftieth anniversary, which according to historian Rudolph Janda was attended by 25,000 people, including all of the leading Czech community organizations.¹³⁵ The bronze stature stands on a low, rectangular, limestone base flanked by two urns in the classical style. The female figure is draped in the classical fashion and wears a mantel that is gathered at the waist and falls in vertical folds to her feet. A cloak falls over her proper left forearm, which also supports a nude child that curls, nearly in a fetal position, to her bosom. The same cloak falls also over her proper right forearm, which is slightly crooked and raised nearly to shoulder level. With this side of the cloak she enfolds, in a protective manner, the figure of an adolescent male, who stands with his back to the cloak and is nude except for a loin cloth held by a cord at the waist. He turns his head back and up, to meet the glance of his mother, who, in turn, looks down and to her proper right. He extends his proper left hand to grasp a length of the cloak below his mother's proper left hand, and his proper right hand, holds a torch. The Semi-centennial history states, "The idea is as follows: The mother, holding a baby in her arms, bids farewell to her young son who is about to set out (sic) the road of life. The torch in his hand represents education and good advices (sic) which he has received from his mother and his determination to spread enlightenment in the world."¹³⁶

It is the work of Albin Polasek and cost \$20,000.¹³⁷ Polasek, born in Frenstat, Moravia, in 1879, immigrated to America in 1901, living first in Veseli, Minnesota, where his two brothers were priests. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, then in Rome and Greece. He opened a

¹³⁵ *Centennial*, pp. 31-32.

¹³⁶ Vojan, p. 122.

¹³⁷ Nemecek, p. 4.

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studio in New York, but was soon asked to head the Department of Sculpture at the Chicago Art Institute, which he did from 1916 to 1943. He became a world-renowned sculptor and won prizes and medals worldwide. He received commissions for three major bronze monuments in prominent locations in Chicago--an allegorical statue, *Spirit of Music* in Grant Park; a statue of the German writer Gotthold Lessing in Washington Park; and, appropriately enough, a monument to Thomas Masaryk, the founder and first president of the Czech Republic, in Douglas Park.¹³⁸ Polasek died in 1965. Two hundred of his sculptures and paintings can be seen at the Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Gardens in Winter Park, Florida.¹³⁹ A second version of the Mother Monument was installed toward the northwest corner of the cemetery (map Number 14).

The Odd Fellows Monument

Various Bohemian lodges of the I.O.O.F played an active role in the support and governance of the cemetery. Plans for a monument (Figure 9, map Number 8) to honor the memory of deceased members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs (the order's woman's organization) were first developed at a meeting of fifty members of these organizations on June 12, 1927. Financial difficulties, no doubt related to the Great Depression, delayed the onset of construction, which took place only in 1936.¹⁴⁰ The dedication was on May 9, 1937, with the deed presented to the Bohemian National Cemetery Association at that time. In 1955, it became the site of the annual I.O.O.F.-Rebekah Memorial Day Services. Lodges of Odd Fellows erected several monuments in Chicago cemeteries, including Rosehill and Forest Home. (Members buried elsewhere often placed the emblem of the order on their own monuments--three interlocking rings, and the letters F, L, and T, representing Friendship, Love, and Truth.)¹⁴¹ This monument faces west and is in the form of a granite, slightly concave, six-columned Tuscan-order peristyle, fourteen feet tall and twenty-four feet wide, with a bronze plaque at its center (with a dedication inscription and the names of sponsoring lodges) and flanking classical urns. Fraternal symbols, including the interlocking rings and the letters F, L, and T are on the frieze at the center and above each column. Construction was by the Heller Brothers Monument Builders of Chicago.

The World War I and II Memorial

This monument (Figure 10, map Number 2) stands just inside the main gate, on the main road, directly between the gate and the Civil War Memorial. It is a memorial to veterans of both World War I and World War II, including the members of the Czechoslovak Legion, which fought for the independence of the Czech and Slovak homelands in World War I. It was erected by the Bohemian National Cemetery Association in observance of its 75th anniversary. Its dedication was the main feature of the second day of the commemoration

¹³⁸ James L. Reidy, *Chicago Sculpture*, Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1981, pp. 196, 206, 239.

¹³⁹ Nemecek, p. 4.

¹⁴⁰ *Centennial*, p. 33.

¹⁴¹ Nemecek, pp. 4-5.

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of the anniversary on Sunday, August 21, 1952. The Czech address was by Victor H. Filip, Sr., Secretary of the Association, and the English address by Col. George A. Duerr.¹⁴²

The memorial was designed by Chicago architect Joseph R. Bednarik and consists of a simple, forty-four foot aluminum flagpole mounted on a large octagonal base of reddish-brown sand stone with pale red mortar. Memorials are carved into each face of the base. The west side bears the word VICTORY and a carving of the famous Iwo Jima flag-raising image from World War II. One of these flag raisers, Michael Strank (born Mychal) was a Slovak-born soldier in the U.S. Army. The other seven faces of the base show maps that depict major events of the two wars. The panel facing east bears a map of Europe with an Imperial German eagle flag burning at the center; the eighth panel marks the victory in Europe with another map of Europe, this one with the Nazi swastika burning in the center. The Four Freedoms (of speech and worship; from want and fear) are shown in symbolic form and repeated on each side in a frieze around the top of the base.

From the flagpole a U.S. flag is flown every day, donated by the family of a deceased veteran in his honor. Originally, the names of those in whose honor the flag would fly and the date on which it would fly were announced every Sunday morning on the Bohemian National Cemetery portion of the Czechoslovak Radio Hour over Chicago station WTAQ. By the date of the cemetery's centennial, a total of more than 150 flags had been donated. More recently, when the flag is raised, the monument displays the name of the veteran being honored that day.

The Architecture

The Main Gatehouse

The current main gate is an expanded version of the third gate to stand on the same site. The first was built in 1878, a gift of cemetery superintendent John V. Benes, when a six-foot fence was constructed around the original property.¹⁴³ Constructed of wood, it consisted of two posts with simple cushion capitals that supported a flat, arched sign that gave the cemetery's name in Czech and English. Fund raising for a more impressive and permanent main gate commenced in 1880, the same year sketches were submitted by Benes, and approved by the association "with some modifications." He was authorized to draw final plans and to secure bids, but the construction was awarded to him "in recognition of the many services provided by him free of charge," on his bid of \$1,480.00. This gate "consisted of an arch over the entrance road, topped by a bell tower, with office space adjoining for the grave digger and the Superintendent," and was completed on November 17, 1880.¹⁴⁴ A photograph shows a flat-roofed, symmetrical structure, rectangular in plan, and built of light-colored brick. The center section features a round arch, the actual gateway, springing from piers and flanked by two slightly lower sections with segmental-arched windows below corbel tables that supported thin cornices.

¹⁴² *Centennial*, p. 33-34.

¹⁴³ Vojan, p. 17.

¹⁴⁴ *Centennial*, p. 57.

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On November 13, 1892, during the annual tour of inspection of the cemetery, the delegates recommended several improvements to the property, including a new main gate. At a meeting the following December, the association initiated the project, and on March 1, 1893, a design, by a local Czech-born architect named John Krivanek, was approved.¹⁴⁵ Little is known of Krivanek or his work, and only a single structure by him is listed in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey--an 1890 Italianate style three flat at 2020 South Allport Street on the lower west side of Chicago.¹⁴⁶

In December of 1893, a report to the association declared that a "new main gate and house for the gardener" had been completed at a cost of \$15,179.30.¹⁴⁷ Originally symmetrical, this structure, in rusticated limestone, is still at the center of the current, expanded gate house (Figure 11a). Two wings, each with two pointed-arch windows, crenellated parapets, and hipped, terracotta-tiled roofs flank the pointed-arched, central gate, above which crenellations connect short flanking turrets and a crenellated belfry with a pointed, pyramidal spire topped by a copper finial, surrounded at its base with additional crenellations. Czech and English versions of the cemetery's name carved in stone flank the entrance, one to each side.

Either in late 1905 or early 1906, plans were submitted by yet another local, Czech-born architect named Anton F. Rusy for the remodeling of the main gate and the addition of an annex "to contain modern public waiting rooms." Rusy seems to have had a moderately successful architectural practice in Chicago. Three single family residences and a three-flat by him, all in the Prairie Style, survive in the West Town and Lawndale neighborhoods of Chicago. More notably, he was the architect for a Classical Revival style monument to the Czech patriot Karel Havlicek, which is still to be found at 750 East Achsah Bond Drive, on the near south side of Chicago.¹⁴⁸

Rusy's plans were duly approved by the association and the cornerstone containing a number of historical documents was laid on November 11, 1906. Construction was completed in September, 1907, at a cost of \$13,677.00, plus \$250.00 to Rusy "for his services."¹⁴⁹ The style of the new additions (Figs. 11a-b) follows that of the old. The additions broke the symmetry suitable to the Beaux Arts style of Benes' original plat, but lent it a more picturesque silhouette, more appropriate to its medieval-revival style. A small, cubic, flat-roofed and crenellated addition extends toward the street on the south side. This once housed the cemetery office, then the guard's station. Opposite it, on the cemetery side, a broad new porch with a low-slung, terracotta-tiled, hipped roof meets this and wraps in an "L" shape around the original wing. The original north wing was extended into a long hall. Its original hipped roof was extended to approximately half of the new length, where a slightly

¹⁴⁵ *Centennial*, p. 62.

¹⁴⁶ <http://w16.cityofchicago.org/landmark/SilverStream/Pages/landmarks.html>

¹⁴⁷ *Centennial*, p. 62.

¹⁴⁸ <http://w16.cityofchicago.org/landmark/SilverStream/Pages/landmarks.html>

¹⁴⁹ Vojan, p. 76.

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higher, also hipped, roof continues to the north. On the street side, a squat, crenellated, octagonal tower sits at the edge of the earlier wing. On the cemetery side, a second, longer, hipped-roofed porch with a dormer was added. The north sides of this new hall and porch meet at a short, narrow, crenellated turret. The exterior is unchanged; it was tuckpointed in October of 1951, and again in 1953, and a new roof, matching the old, was installed in 1952-53. The bell tower was repaired in 1953.¹⁵⁰ In 2001, new soffits were added.

The men's waiting rooms occupy the south end of the northern section of the Gatehouse, the women's, the north. With the exception of the rest rooms, the very handsome interior has not changed significantly since the 1906 remodeling. In December of 1929, the waiting rooms were redecorated by firm of Mr. J. A. Mallin and new aluminum ceilings were installed in the waiting rooms.

Joseph Anton Mallin, who owned a very successful interior decorating studio in Chicago, came to be the favored decorator of the cemetery association. He was born Johann Malinkowitz in 1883, in Hlohevec, Moravia. In 1899, he enrolled at the school of the Interior and Decorative Painters Guild. Eventually becoming a master painter, he worked on churches and residences in Vienna and elsewhere in Europe before coming to Chicago in 1906. With his studio, he is said to have decorated over one hundred churches in the Chicago area, including St. Agatha, St. Hedwiga, St. Basil, Our Lady of Lourdes, and St. Mary of the Angels. He also decorated the Olympic Theater in Cicero and the estate of James Cuneo in Libertyville, now the Cuneo Museum. He eventually planned and supervised all of the major decoration and redecoration projects commissioned by the association and worked in all of the major buildings of the cemetery. His decorations for the Old Bohemians Home, an institution affiliated with the cemetery, have been lost to remodeling. His ashes rest in a niche in the western columbarium of the crematory building.¹⁵¹

In June of 1968, modern equipment and fixtures were installed in both washrooms.¹⁵² Both waiting rooms (Figs. 11c-d) feature large rectangular windows on the east walls (looking out to the porch) and pointed arched windows on the north, south, and west walls. Narrow borders of small, square ceramic tiles surrounds small white hexagonal ceramic tiles punctuated at regular intervals by polychrome geometric patterns. The walls are of white glazed bricks up to a high, dark oak moulding, then of painted plaster. A green ceramic tile fireplace holds a green marble mantel, a rectangular mirror and a dark oak cornice. The plaster ceiling is divided by dark oak mouldings.

At first glance, the incorporation of the Gothic pointed arch may seem an odd choice of architectural motifs for the main gate. The most common association with the style in the nineteenth century was with medieval Christianity. The "pointed style" was said to be "associated in the minds of all" with "religious feeling" and to

¹⁵⁰ *Centennial*, pp. 108, 332.

¹⁵¹ *Introduction to the Bohemian National Cemetery Crematorium/Columbarium*, Chicago: Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery, 2005, p. 18.

¹⁵² *Centennial*, pp. 108, 332.

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be "peculiarly suitable to a place designed to be the last home of mortality."¹⁵³ Thus, it was most commonly employed in structures, and for institutions, with Christian affiliations, including cemetery chapels and gates. A remarkably similar design was published already in the 1830s for the gatehouse at the Kensall Green Cemetery in England, and one not too dissimilar was completed for the Tower Hamlets Cemetery in England in the 1940s.¹⁵⁴ Gatehouses using medieval styles were also common in America cemeteries during the nineteenth century for just those religious associations. In fact, Rosehill Cemetery, a city cemetery just to the east in Chicago, has a rusticated limestone gatehouse designed by William Boyington and built in 1864. It features crenellations, turrets, and pointed arches and may be the model for that of Bohemian National Cemetery.

Of course the Bohemian National Cemetery most certainly does not have a Christian affiliation (although it accepts burials of any religious denomination). Instead, Krivanek, and Rusy after him, obviously recognized the civic nature of the space created by Benes' landscape design, the main street of which the gate opens onto. In this case, the medieval motifs, particularly the crenellations and turrets, have slightly different, yet still very appropriate associations. Drawing on the features of any number of surviving European medieval city walls, for example, those of Seville or Segovia in Spain, the association is one of symbolic protection of the literal *necropolis* and the metaphorical *polis* that Benes created.

The Administration Building

This is the second building on this site. A photograph of the original cemetery office survives, but little documentation. It appears to have been built as a "proper building for the office of the Gardener" in conjunction with the replacement, in 1896, of the second greenhouse, which dated from 1887.¹⁵⁵ Work on both was completed in November of that year, and on New-Year's day, 1898, "the office was moved to the gardener's building."¹⁵⁶ The name of the architect is not recorded, but given its similarity in style and materials, and its proximity in date, to the gate house design of 1893, it was likely Krivanek. The materials appear to be the same rusticated limestone. Its front façade is flat and symmetrical, with corbels below and crenellations above a narrow, horizontal cornice. The roof is flat, the door at the center and the two windows that flank it to either side are pointed, and crenellated bartizans punctuate the parapet at either side.

Two plans for a new administration building were submitted to the association in 1917, one for a two-story building to cost \$8,500.00 and the other for a one-story building to cost \$4,500.00. The latter was approved. Fifty bids were received, but construction was deferred as the lowest bid was for \$63,500.00--\$70,000.00 with furniture and equipment.¹⁵⁷ Plans for a new administration building were submitted by Rusy in November of

¹⁵³ James Stevens Curl, *Death and Architecture*, rev. ed., Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2002, p. 216.

¹⁵⁴ Curl, pp. 215-16; 239-40.

¹⁵⁵ *Centennial*, pp. 59-63.

¹⁵⁶ Vojan, p. 62.

¹⁵⁷ *Centennial*, p. 82.

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1924, along with those for new greenhouses and a residence to house the cemetery superintendents with an estimated cost of \$32,000.00 to 35,000.00. On January 21, 1925, a special meeting was devoted to the state of the administration building and greenhouses. The latter were "in poor condition structurally," and the former "grossly insufficient to meet current demands." The Board of Trustees was authorized to proceed with the construction of new facilities. Bids for this construction were submitted at a special meeting held on May 23, 1925. On the basis of the lowest bid (\$137,610.00), contracts were let. The dedication of the new facilities was held on May 22, 1926. Before an interior remodeling, the administration building included a palm house of tropical plants and a gold fish pond, prompting the claim that it was "one of the most beautiful of its kind in the United States."¹⁵⁸

The exterior of the administration building (Figure 12a) is in the Classical Revival style. The blueprints for the project have survived (Figures 12a and 12b). It is a simplified, symmetrical, Palladian-style, built of ashlar limestone and sheltered under a terracotta-tiled, hipped roof. Its front façade features a pro- and tetrastyle portico with foliated capitals. All four columns are of a single piece of limestone. Two round-arched windows, each with a fan light, flank the portico to either side. The entrance is recessed, and consists of a central door and two flanking, rectangular windows, each with a festoon in relief above. The cornice and raking cornice of the portico have dentils, the pediment contains a festooned cartouche in relief and the frieze displays the cemetery's name in English.

The style of the administration building is another indication of a phenomenon common in the nineteenth century, and found throughout the cemetery architecture, the inclination to use different, established, architectural styles according to their most common associations. In the United States, this tendency can be traced at least as far back as Thomas Jefferson, who favored Classical and Renaissance Revival forms in his architecture for their "lofty cultural associations." He believed architecture was "a form of visual education in support of the democratic ideal" and that "only an enlightened educated people could govern their own affairs." Thus, for him, "architecture was a means of effecting social reform, education, and enlightenment."¹⁵⁹ Thereafter in America, Classical and Renaissance styles often represented intellectual and enlightened values, and were commonly employed for governmental and administrative buildings. Here, the Renaissance Revival style alluded to this same Jeffersonian spirit of intellectual inquiry, cultural achievement, and democratic reform (vis-à-vis Hapsburg Austria) central to the Czech freethought movement.

In August of 1942, minor repairs were done to the roof (costing only \$158.00). The masonry of the building is unchanged—however, some restoration was necessary in August of 1948, when extensive repairs were made to foundations that were laid too shallow. In September of 1948 cemetery workers performed unspecified

¹⁵⁸ *Centennial*, p. 87.

¹⁵⁹ Leland M. Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979, pp. 73-76

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“repair work” on the steps and façade.¹⁶⁰ In 1968 the tropical garden in the adjoining palm house was dismantled and the space was converted to a green house for cemetery flowers and displays. This involved removing a dramatic, hexagonal cupola with an onion-shaped lantern and lowering the roof. In 1954, the tile roof was replaced—perhaps with asphalt shingles, which currently cover the roof. And in 1961 the original bronze doors on the main entrance were replaced with stainless steel glass doors. The last accompanied a major remodeling of the interior, and this may be when ceramic tile was added to the arches above the side windows and when the windows beside the entrance were laid with glass blocks—the only changes to the facade. In 1965, the exterior was cleaned and tuck-pointed.¹⁶¹

The interior of the administration building has undergone alterations. The entire interior was redecorated in December 1929 at the cost of \$2,600.00 by J.A. Mallin’s interior design firm. In November of 1934, the offices of the comptroller and the floral Department were combined, and in May of 1940, a stairway from the main floor to the storage area above the office was built. In September of 1941, the interior was redecorated for a second time (again by Mallin), and in October of 1945, a new floor was laid in both the office and floral department (for \$2,049.00).¹⁶² Currently, the interior is laid out with the office of the supervisor to the west of the main entrance and the board room to the east. Opposite these, on the south of the building, are a storage area to the east and the remains of the floral department to the west. Between them is a large office space for general administrative tasks.

In 1961, a major “modernization” of the interior was carried out in which “selection was made of the color and quality of wall paneling, of mosaic tile and other material” and the “removal of marble, etc.”¹⁶³ During one remodeling, perhaps this one of 1961, the ceiling of the front two-thirds of the building was lowered providing storage space above. The original ceiling moulding, plus ornamental stenciling, perhaps from the 1929 redecoration, are still visible above it. Also visible, on the entire eastern portion of the original ceiling, is a mural painted, apparently *a secco*, directly on the plaster. It consists of floral motifs in pastel colors executed in an impressionistic manner with an over-all composition reminiscent of Monet’s late works. The association’s history records neither the date of completion, nor the name of an artist. It may have been part of Mallin’s redecoration of 1929, and perhaps by him, as he is occasionally referred to in this same history as an “artist.”

The current state of the interior of the administration seems to be the result of this remodeling of 1961. In the large central space, the floors are carpeted wall-to-wall in light brown; the walls are blond, laminated paneling; and the ceiling is of acoustic tile with circular florescent fixtures alternating with round HVAC vents in six rows laid from north to south. A counter of light brown laminated panels surrounds a work space for administrative purposes to the southeast. The boardroom and administrator’s office, in the northwest and

¹⁶⁰ *Centennial*, pp. 109, 140.

¹⁶¹ *Centennial*, pp. 323-325.

¹⁶² *Centennial*, pp. 108-109.

¹⁶³ *Centennial*, p. 324.

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northeast corners respectively, - are carpeted and paneled in the manner of the central space. The remains of the greenhouse, in the southwest corner of the administration building, features a linoleum floor, white glazed ceramic brick walls, and a curved plaster ceiling. A cooler for cut flowers lines the east wall, and windows open to Pulaski Road to the west.

The Crematory Building

The crematorium (Figs. 13 a-b; map Number 5), lies at a right angle to, and facing, the main road, on the third block east of the main gatehouse. This is the masterpiece of the cemetery's architecture. It houses three types of facilities--the crematory furnaces, or retorts, on the lower level to the south; a vast, domed, ceremony hall (often referred to as the main chapel), immediately above; and a series of columbariums for the inurnment of remains—one, with a small chapel, on the lower level to the west, and three on the upper level to the north. The pride the cemetery association has in this monumental structure is partially indicated by the detailed account of its construction, decoration, and maintenance found in the official histories of the cemetery.

In 1902, the Bohemian American Cremation Association founded in 1901 proposed that the cemetery association erect the first Czech crematorium in the world. A committee was appointed, and by September of 1911, the preliminary work was complete. By April of 1912, Rusy had been commissioned to prepare sketches. A public competition for designs was staged, but with only Bohemian architects. The architects Frank Randak, Rusy, and Anton Charvat received the prizes, in that order, but all three plans were rejected, their costs exceeded a \$35,000.00 limit. On June 11, 1913, Randak submitted a letter detailing his new plans and proposal. The limit was rescinded, and on July 2, 1913, an appropriation of \$65,000.00 was approved." Blueprints from Randak's office of the ceiling framing plan for the structure, including the tower and the great dome, have survived (Figures 13c-d).

Of all of the Czech-born and Czech-American architects who worked closely with the Bohemian National Cemetery, Randak had the greatest impact on Chicago architecture in general. At least twelve buildings by him, mainly single family residences and two-and three-flat apartment building survive in the city. Almost all of these are in the suburbs of North and South Lawndale (mainly the last), suggesting that his clientele was mainly Czech and Czech American. Most of these are in the Classical Revival style, although some have decorative details of the Art Deco/Moderne style. All of them were started between 1904 and 1910. His single surviving commercial building is the 1912 Lawndale National Bank building at 3333 West 26th Street in South Lawndale.¹⁶⁴

The cornerstone of the crematory building was laid on December 7, 1913. A contract was awarded, in March, 1914, to Jarvis Engineering Company for installation of two retorts for \$6,500.00. On November 12, 1914, the first cremation took place, of Joseph Bezdek, a Bohemian-American poet. The fee was \$25.00 with

¹⁶⁴ <http://w16.cityofchicago.org/landmark/SilverStream/Pages/landmarks.html>

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use of the lower chapel, \$30.00 with the large chapel.¹⁶⁵ In July, 1915, the Pilsen Foundry Company was contracted for the construction of a columbarium of porcelain niches, for \$4,500.00. The decoration of the main chapel was awarded to J. A. Mallin for \$3,000.00, with the Bohemian Arts Club of Chicago as advisor.¹⁶⁶ The dedication was held on January 26, 1919, when President Pecha, spoke of "the pride of Bohemians not only in Chicago, but throughout the United States." A report of February, 1922, listed the income to date from the Crematory operation as \$38,511.79, and the total cost of the crematory and columbarium as \$107,730.00. In June, 1922, with only original forty niches remaining, a contract was awarded to Garden City Iron Works for the sum of \$9,542.00 for 200 niches, with completion by Memorial Day of 1924.¹⁶⁷

In October, 1928, a contract was awarded to J. A. Mallin for redecoration of the main chapel for the sum of \$7,500.00, "with gold leaf to be used instead of gold paint." Upon completion in February of 1929, he redecorated the lower chapel at a cost of \$600.00. In October 1930, the Board of Trustees organized a competition for a new columbarium section in the east wing. Nine architects participated, with the prizes going to Francis J. Dittrich (\$200.00), Anthony J. Zelenka (\$150.00), and J. Nadherny (\$100.00). However, Zelenka's plan was chosen; it provided for 723 niches as compared to 468 and 582 for the first and third plans. The contract went to Builders Ornamental Iron Company on its lowest bid of \$31,430.00, with the number of niches increased to 748 and the material specified as brass. Final inspection was set for Sunday, May 22, 1932.¹⁶⁸

In the plans, provision was made for twelve "Italian style" windows displaying the emblems of various organizations, including the Rationalist Federation, the Mother Statue, and the American and Czechoslovak flags, for a total of sixteen emblems. Subsequently the emblem of the CSA was placed above the speaker's podium in the chapel and the emblems of the Bohemian American Cremation Society, the Unity of Czech Ladies and Men, the Czech Ladies Benevolent Society, and the various veteran's organizations were added. At about the same time, Zelenka designed a small addition (nine feet, six inches deep by nineteen feet wide) to the center of the rear of the building. It matches the style of the existing structure, and was built to allow for a special exit for speakers and singers from the chapel and to add a dressing room for uniformed groups such as the Masons and Odd Fellows (Figure 13e). The stone work was by the Stein Cut Stone Company, for a total of \$4,015.00. The blueprints from Zelenka's office for the floor plans and elevations have survived. In 1940, two additional retorts were installed, with plans drawn by Joseph R. Bednarik and labor by Novy Brothers, for a total of \$12,557.50, exclusive of the architect's fee. Mallin decorated the lobby and hallway of the crematorium for \$3,400.00, and four new chandeliers were installed in the main chapel at \$160.00 each. In August of 1944, Mallin repaired and retouched water damaged art work in the upper portion of the crematorium lobby for \$1,200.00.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ *Centennial*, pp. 259-260.

¹⁶⁶ Vojan, p. 99.

¹⁶⁷ *Centennial*, pp. 263-265.

¹⁶⁸ *Centennial*, p. 269.

¹⁶⁹ *Centennial*, pp. 270-272.

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In October of 1945, plans were drawn by Bednarik for 553 niches to be built along both walls of the entry hallway to the main chapel and for niches to be added to the walls of the lower chapel. Upon completion of the new columbarium, redecorating of the main chapel for the sum of \$1,600.00, and of the lower chapel for the sum of \$278.00, was awarded to Mallin. Two new chandeliers were installed in the new columbarium section in March, 1950.¹⁷⁰

In April of 1960, "four dormers and excess copper flashing" were removed from the crematorium roof, and in June of 1962, extensive repairs to the dome were done by Lawrence J. Keefe and Company. Rusted steel nails were removed, then ninety percent of the roof tiles were re-installed, for \$9,772.00. According to one brief account "six cupolas" were removed from the crematory roof, perhaps during this same re-roofing. No historical photographs showing these "dormers" or "cupolas" survive; the reference seems to be to alterations to the roofing of the six small corner blocks found at the ends of the front façade and at the corners of the dome. It was probably at this time that small limestone urns, originally set at the outside corners of these blocks and at four points along the perimeter of the dome, were removed. In April, 1972, glass windows in the lower level of the building were replaced with glass blocks. Repairs of the windows in the upper level were undertaken in the spring of 1973, requiring the removal of many of the stained glass windows with organization emblems installed in 1932.¹⁷¹

The exterior of the crematory building (Figures 13a-b) is in a Renaissance Revival style and is reminiscent of a traditional basilica plan, with an axis that leads from the main entrance at the north, through the main columbarium, to the chapel at the south. The exterior surfaces are of ashlar limestone, and the dome is covered with red terracotta tiles. The entrance is marked by six Tuscan-order columns *in antis* below a balustraded parapet, set between two small, flanking cubical corner blocks, each with a round-arched window. A single rectangular bell tower sits over the center of the north end, just behind the main façade; the dome, with sixteen ribs, rises above the drum of the main chapel to the south.

Reminiscent of the nave and aisles of a basilica plan, the interior of the columbarium (Figures 13f-i) consists of three parallel halls lined with small glazed niches for cremation urns—with a wide center hall and two narrower flanking halls. The elaborate ceiling molding and all of Mallin's ornamental painting in the central columbarium are now concealed beneath a slightly curving plaster ceiling of an unknown date. The smaller chapel below, lined with glazed niches, is rectangular, simpler in style, and now devoid of any ornamentation. The area for the cremation ovens is spare and utilitarian.

The main chapel (Figures 13j-l), to the south of the columbarium, is a circular space consisting of a two-story cylindrical drum below, with leaded and stained-glass clerestory windows. There are nine clerestory

¹⁷⁰ *Centennial*, pp. 272-275.

¹⁷¹ *Centennial*, pp. 273, 277.

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windows total: three to the north, three to the east, and three to the south. The ornament in all nine windows is the same, and consists of garlands, plus the torches and urns that are symbolic of cremation. Four sets of paired, colossal Tuscan-order columns--set on four, five-foot tall plinths that define a square--join the two stories of the drum. They are green, with a faux-marble, polished plaster finish. Above, a monumental, coffered, saucer dome encloses the space. According to surviving blueprints, the dome is twenty-three feet, six inches high on the interior, and just over sixty-two feet wide on the exterior. It is constructed of sixteen curving, triangularized steel trusses, and was engineered by the Chicago firm of Westcott and Ronneberg Engineers (Figures 13c-d). Mallin's polychromed and gilded, hand-painted fraternal symbols and ornamental patterns still cover the plaster walls and the underside of the vault. The insignias include fourteen fraternal emblems--the Czech Legion, the Knights of Pythias, the International Order of Odd Fellows, the Masons, the Bohemian American Cremation Association, the Spanish American War Veterans, the American Legion, the Czechoslovak Society of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the *Cesko-Slovenska Jednota*, the C.S.P.S. (*Cesko Slovanske Podporujici Spolecnost*), the Sokol, the Society of Taborites, and the C.S.P.J (Czech Slavonic Ladies Benevolent Association, and the *Jednota Ceskych Dam* (Unity of Czech Ladies). Others include the eagle and shield of the United States of America, the lion of Czechoslovakia, a torch (a reference to cremation), and the blue pansy symbol of the Bohemian Free-Thinkers of Chicago (Pansy is from the French *Pensee*, meaning "thought"). Several of the twelve "Italian style" windows have survived, with emblems of the C.S.J. (Bohemian Slovenian Union), the Czech-American Foresters, and the Pilsen Butchers Benevolent Association.¹⁷²

For his design, Randak adapted and merged two familiar building types--the domed, central-plan and the basilica plan. The former was used commonly at a very early date for funerary architecture in the West, for example, Roman and Early Christian vaulted mausoleums. The type was revived beginning in the mid-eighteenth-century, during what has been called "a new golden age of mausolea."¹⁷³ Very often, these were in Classical and Renaissance styles--the 1731 mausoleum at Castle Howard in Yorkshire, England, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, and the Pelham mausoleum at Brocklesby Park in England.

Of course, the crematorium at Bohemian National Cemetery is not a mausoleum, but a facility for cremation, with spaces for the services that preceded it and the storage of the resulting remains. The vast cemeteries of the nineteenth century aroused fear of the contamination of the air, soil, and drinking water, and early promoters of cremation emphasized its hygienic aspects. Cremation was first introduced in Germany in the 1870s, and into France and England in the 1880s. The idea of cremation was promoted in the United States as early as the 1870s, and in 1881, the New York Cremation Society and the United States Cremation Company were formed.¹⁷⁴ Among the first crematoria in American were those at Troy, Buffalo, Cincinnati, and St Louis.¹⁷⁵ The crematorium in the Odd Fellows' Cemetery in San Francisco included a large columbarium,

¹⁷² *Introduction to the Crematorium/Columbarium*, pp. 3-8; 13-17.

¹⁷³ Curl, p. 180.

¹⁷⁴ Curl, p. 307.

¹⁷⁵ Curl, p. 307.

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erected in 1895, with provision for nearly 2,000 niches. In Chicago, the crematorium at Graceland Cemetery was erected in 1893, and designed by Holabird and Roche.¹⁷⁶

It is worth noting that, as with the columbarium of the Bohemian National Cemetery, the favored styles for early crematoria were classical in inspiration, for example, the Tempio Crematorio in Turin, the Tempio Crematorio in Genoa's Cimitero di Staglieno, and the Heidelberg crematorium. The association is probably with the ancient Romans, who practiced cremation and with rational thought and enlightened attitudes on which the first promoters of cremation prided themselves. Some early crematoria also feature the domed, central plan type characteristic of mausolea, the Tempio Crematorio in Milan, which is flanked by columbaria. The crematorium complex at one of Europe's best-known cemeteries, Pere-Lachaise, was designed in the late 1880s by Formigé, chief architect of the city of Paris, with a symmetrical plan and a centralized, domed, space for public ceremonies at its core. It is surrounded by arcaded columbaria.¹⁷⁷

The introduction of cremation to Europe and the United States was not without controversy. The favoring of cremation as a rational method of disposal of the dead by anti-clericals, revolutionaries, and radicals has been a consistent factor in recent history. The Christian attitude to cremation was historically one of opposition.¹⁷⁸ A reverence for the dead, and especially for the relics of martyrs, encouraged the protection and preservation of bodies in catacombs and *loculi* in tombs. Their opposition increased when that mode of disposal became associated with French radical thought, with godlessness, and later, with Jacobinism. Various tomes were written to argue the Christian position, and many more were produced to point out that Christians could be cremated without any problems for a general resurrection.

Since the Roman Catholic Church forbade cremation, until 1963, in Chicago, the construction of the crematorium at Bohemian National Cemetery was part of the same local conflict between the Czech freethought community and the Roman Catholic Church that had spurred the founding of the cemetery. But, ironically, although the modern cremation movement was historically secular, functional, hygienic, and even anti-clerical, and although the design of crematoria does not evolve from any liturgical requirement (there being no rite in modern times for cremation in a European tradition), many early crematoria were designed to look like churches, occasionally with the furnace flues installed in the "bell-towers."¹⁷⁹

Randak followed suit with his adoption of a basilica-type plan for the chapel, crematorium, and columbarium complex. It is notable that the competition between the two groups of Czech-Americans in Chicago sparked the creation of parallel institutions, each had its own cultural, benevolent, and working-men's societies; gymnastic clubs and fraternal lodges; presses and publishing houses; and schools, orphanages, and

¹⁷⁶ Curl, p. 308.

¹⁷⁷ Curl, p. 307.

¹⁷⁸ Curl, p. 301.

¹⁷⁹ Curl, p. 310.

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old-folks homes. Yet, the freethinkers could not duplicate one element shared by the Roman Catholics--the cathedral church as a site of ritual and a locus of community. The architecture and landscape design of Bohemian National Cemetery were contrived to fill this lacuna. To this effect, the crematorium's Renaissance Revival style, as it does with the administration building, proclaims the freethinkers' core, secular values of enlightened thinking and intellectual inquiry. At the same time, the building provides a grand and monumental space that rivals the Roman Catholic basilica. It provides a comparable sense of gravitas for secular ceremonies, in order that they might generate a degree of emotional satisfaction appropriate for the final disposition of the remains of a loved-one.

The Water Tower, Pump House, and Locker and Lunchroom

The current water tower (Figure 14) is one of five utilitarian buildings on the cemetery grounds, none of which are as thoroughly documented by the association as the main buildings. It is the second of two towers on this site. In March of 1898, the cemetery's first "water tank" was constructed in the waterhouse.¹⁸⁰ The latter was rebuilt, in 1901, at a cost of \$1,659.00. It is not clear whether this tank was part of the first water tower. The cemetery's histories do not record the date of construction of the first water tower, only that it was repaired in September, 1933, for \$250.00; was painted with the cemetery name in June 1939; was repainted, with its metal frame in September 1940, for \$350.00; and was repaired again in January 1946. In September 1949, it was found to be beyond repair, and a new water tower was installed by the construction firm of Johnson and Carlson (said to have installed the previous tower) for \$3,190.00. With the new employee locker and lunchroom, and the new warehouse and workshop, apparently all designed by Joseph R. Bednarik, it was inspected in September 1950. Bednarik is another in the long line of Czech and Czech-American architects who worked closely with the cemetery association. He has already been mentioned as the architect who prepared the plans for the addition of two retorts and for the central columbarium in the crematory building. Little is known of him and his work. He did design one important building in the city, the Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, a Byzantine style church at 2414 West 53rd Street in Gage Park in Chicago, which was begun in 1932. But other than this, only one single family residence in the Prairie Style by him, at 9126 Winchester Avenue, in Beverly, Illinois, started in 1928, is listed in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey database.¹⁸¹

In February 1954, the water tank and tower were painted, and the cemetery name was painted on the tank. Repairs were made to the pump house roof in March 1975.¹⁸² The tower is a slightly tapering cylinder of some seventy-five feet made of smooth red brick and with a single, round-arched doorway to the north. The water tank is of wood, and is surrounded by a walk way with a metal railing. The cemetery's name is still painted on the north and south sides of the tank.

¹⁸⁰ *Centennial*, p. 65.

¹⁸¹ <http://w16.cityofchicago.org/landmark/SilverStream/Pages/landmarks.html>

¹⁸² *Centennial*, pp. 113, 141, 332, 335.

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The pump house to the east (Figure 14) is a single story, cubical structure of rough red brick with linear and geometric smooth red brick details. The walls, on a low limestone base, feature a string course, a belt course and a cornice. The windows have been replaced with glass blocks. The interior is plain and utilitarian and now includes space for storage. In 1920, the board of trustees recommended the construction of a building where the cemetery workers could change clothes and spend the "noon recess."¹⁸³ This original locker and lunchroom, designed by Rusy in 1921, and built at a cost of \$3,000.00, was replaced in 1949, when during negotiations with the Cemetery Worker's Union, a demand was made for construction of a more suitable locker and lunchroom for the cemetery workers. The association consented, and in August a survey of suitable sites was made. Bednarik prepared plans and specifications for the building, and bids were let. Construction was awarded to the lowest bidder at \$29,705.83. In mid-1950, it was completed at a total cost of \$29,951.52.¹⁸⁴ The building (Figure 14) is circular in plan, but with an octagonal pitched roof. Construction is of rough red bricks with smooth red brick details and a both a belt and a string course of limestone. The interior is utilitarian, and now used for storage.

The Garage and Repair Shop

In 1921, the cemetery board approved Rusy's plans for a locker and lunchroom for cemetery employees to be built at a cost of \$3,000.00. This project was revised to include erection of a garage at a total cost of \$10,675.00. On February 12, 1936, a fire completely destroyed the garage (plus an automobile and two trucks). A plan to build a new one along Foster Avenue was abandoned (it would have required a wider access bridge across the Chicago River) and a new garage was constructed on the same site at an estimated cost of \$3,211.00. In February 1950, new cement floors were laid for \$1,350.00, and roof repairs were completed in March, 1950, October 1962, and March 1975.¹⁸⁵ The rectangular exterior (Figure 15) is built of light brown common brick with smooth red brick trim with a single garage door to the west. The windows have been replaced by glass blocks. The roof is supported by curved wooden trusses and wooden rafters. The floors are concrete.

The Duplex Residence

Plans for a residence to house the cemetery superintendents were submitted by Rusy in November of 1924, along with those for the new administration building and greenhouses, with an estimated cost of \$32,000.00 to 35,000.00. Construction bids were secured, and a one of \$30,445.00 was approved at a special meeting of December 21, 1924.¹⁸⁶ The structure (Figure 16) consists of three residences--a central, two-story, cubical core and two identical, single-story, rectangular wings set at right-angles to the main section and connected to it with short halls. Construction is of textured brown bricks with smooth, linear, red brick accents. The roof is hipped, with terracotta tiles. In scale and layout, the wings resemble the bungalows common in the surrounding neighborhoods of northwestern Chicago. The interiors, largely untouched, with the exception of the kitchens,

¹⁸³ Vojan, p. 106.

¹⁸⁴ *Centennial*, p. 117.

¹⁸⁵ *Centennial*, pp. 85, 114, 325.

¹⁸⁶ *Centennial*, p. 87.

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likewise resemble Chicago-style bungalows in there blonde oak woodwork and floors. The exteriors are also intact, although the rear porches have been enclosed and new metal soffits were installed. According to the cemetery history, the tile roofs were repaired in September 1960, but they remain intact today.¹⁸⁷

The Warehouse and Repair Shop

Plans were first made for a warehouse and repair shop in 1941, but they were deferred because of a war-time scarcity of materials. In 1948, a site was recommended alongside Foster Avenue, one deemed inconvenient for burials. Required approval of the site by the Appellate Branch of Chicago Board of Building Commissioners was secured, and in September 1948, Bednarik submitted plans, subsequently approved, for a 158 foot long by 60.5 foot wide structure. The low bid was for \$61,001.00. By December 1948, construction was reported to be proceeding, and in 1949, the delegates inspected the new building.¹⁸⁸ However, when the portion of the cemetery along the Chicago River was sold to the city of Chicago, this structure was razed in 2005 to make way for park landscaping.

Mausoleums and Grave Markers

Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago contains nine and one-half acres of single graves and forty-eight mausoleums interspersed throughout the eighty acres of lots on the property.

Mausoleums

The mausoleums are in a variety of architectural styles, mainly the most popular nineteenth-century revival styles. The first mausoleum in the cemetery was built in section O by the Vollerston family in 1883 (Figure 18). It is a simple, nearly unornamented, cubical structure with four large courses of quarry-faced granite masonry, a gabled roof, and foliate molding surrounding the doorway. The materials and style are representative of several mausoleums in the cemetery that are based on the Romanesque Revival style popularized in America by Henry Hobson Richardson in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is worth noting, however, that it pre-dates the most famous structure of that style in Chicago by Richardson, the Marshall Field Wholesale Store of 1885, and the most famous variant on the style by a Chicago architect, Louis Sullivan's Auditorium Building of 1896.

The 1904 Triner mausoleum and the 1943 Hurt mausoleum are particularly fine examples of two other popular revival styles. The former, in section 15 (Figure 19), is in the Egyptian Revival style, deemed in the nineteenth century to be particularly appropriate for cemetery gates and mausoleums because of the enduring association of ancient Egyptian culture with funerary sculpture and architecture. It features two papyrus-capital columns *in antis* flanking the central entrance. The capitals are further ornamented with bas relief carvings of lotus blossoms. The flared cornice above has an Egyptian winged solar disk motif in low relief. (This is a form that Horus of Edfu takes in his battles with his uncle Seth. The god Thoth used his magic to turn Horus into a

¹⁸⁷ *Centennial*, p. 325.

¹⁸⁸ *Centennial*, pp. 115-117.

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sun-disk with splendid outstretched wings. The goddesses Nekhbet and Uazet in the form of uraeus snakes joined him at his side.)¹⁸⁹ A stained glass window at the rear of the interior displays the Mason's symbol. A semi-circular exedra punctuated at its ends with urns on rectangular bases encloses the compact, cubical structure. The urns are encircled with lotus blossoms, Egyptian symbols of rebirth, in low relief. (One creation myth has the new born sun god rising out of a floating lotus.) The Hurt mausoleum, in section 21 (Figure 20), is an equally compact, cubical structure, but in the Gothic Revival style. Because of its association with the Christian "great age of faith" in medieval Western Europe, beginning in the late-eighteenth century this style was deemed appropriate for any building type with a religious function. The elegantly simple main body of the mausoleum tapers gracefully from a narrow base upwards to a simple, geometric cornice. The pointed arch of the entrance at the center is embellished with delicately carved Gothic-style foliate ornament in the form of grape vines—perhaps Eucharistic symbols. The bronze doors feature lancets and quatrefoils.

The Stejskal-Buchal mausoleum, in section 18 (Figure 21), also in a revival style, shows a novel conjunction of architecture and sculpture. Again compact and cubical in form, its granite, ashlar masonry walls are unornamented. At the front, a simplified frieze supports an equally spare pediment. A semi-circular portico extends from the frieze and is supported at the rear corners by Tuscan pilasters and at the front by two Tuscan columns. The portico is designed to reach out to meet an over-life sized bronze figure that faces it on a direct axis with the entrance. Known officially as *The Pilgrim*, but popularly as *The Grim Reaper*, the bronze (Figure 22) is by the Czech-American sculptor Albin Polasek, the artist of the Mother Monument. Bent with age and leaning on a tall staff, the aged androgynous and heavily shrouded figure strides towards the mausoleum's door. At the right rear of the base, on the top, is the inscription "ALBIN POLASEK" and on the side at the left rear is the inscription "KUNST FNDRY NY." Of a popular type for bronze funerary statues in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was ultimately influenced by the enigmatic and famously pensive figure by Augustus Saint-Gaudens for the 1886 to 1891 Adams Memorial in Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, D.C. Together, the ensemble makes a poignant statement about the acceptance of, and steady progress towards, the inevitability of death.

The 1910 Krupka mausoleum in section 10 (Figure 23), on the other hand, shunned the historicism of the revival styles in favor of more contemporary styles. In particular, it shows the influence of two famous mausoleums by the Chicago architect Louis Sullivan. The cubical shape and thin, rectangular cornice are similar to the Getty tomb of 1890 in Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, and the dome resembles that of the Wainwright tomb in the Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis. The ornament--running along the cornice, surrounding the door, and at the upper corners of each side--reflects the taste for simplified, abstract and geometric motifs favored by a variety of architects and designers of the Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, and Craftsman styles then current in Europe and America—including Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, and although less often, Sullivan himself.

¹⁸⁹ <http://members.aol.com/egyptart/symlst.html#hb>

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The Anton J. Cermak mausoleum (Figure 24) in section 21 is a special point of pride among Czech-Americans in Chicago. Born in Kladno, Czechoslovakia, he was the first of his nationality to become mayor of Chicago—which, as the cemetery association proudly points out, “boasted of the largest concentration of people of Czech and Slovak birth or descent, second only to that of Prague itself.”¹⁹⁰ Earlier, he had served as Chief Bailiff of the Municipal Court, as Alderman of the City of Chicago, and as a member and later President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners. James V. Krakora, in his centennial history of the cemetery noted Cermak’s generous service to the association:

Throughout earlier histories we find repeated references to services rendered the Association and its officers by Anton J. Cermak....As an outstanding example we refer again to the Eastland disaster of July 24, 1915, with a loss of 850 lives, many of which victims were buried at Bohemian National Cemetery, and the work performed by Mr. Cermak and his staff of the Chief Bailiff’s office in providing automobiles (sic) for transport of flowers and survivors of the victims and so managing the large number of funerals taking place within but several days with a minimum of confusion.¹⁹¹

The cemetery association normally refrained from any political activity or endorsement of candidates for public office, but an exception was made for Cermak, and a resolution supporting his candidacy was adopted in March 1931, by the Assembly of Delegates. In 1932, he accepted the invitation, as Mayor, to deliver the English address at the Memorial Day services at the Cemetery.¹⁹² On February 15, 1933, while in Miami to meet and consult with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Cermak was struck by a bullet intended for the President-elect. Upon realizing that he had been hit, he said to Roosevelt “I am glad it was me instead of you.” Cermak died in Miami on March 6, 1933. On March 10, a funeral procession moved from City Hall to the Chicago Stadium, where the services were conducted, then to Bohemian National Cemetery where his remains were entombed in the Cermak family mausoleum. According to Krakora:

The large number of dignitaries, both men and women, from all fields of American political, civic, religious, industrial, etc. circles, present at the services was a first exceptional and unforgettable (sic) occasion in the Association’s history....Great was the honor bestowed upon the Bohemian National Cemetery when on the occasion of his official visit to the Chicago World Fair, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, accompanied by his wife Eleanor, and by many city, county, state and government officials, visited the cemetery on October 2, 1933, to place a wreath at the Cermak mausoleum as a token of his respect for and memory of the late Mayor Cermak.¹⁹³

The centennial history of the cemetery includes an historical photograph of Roosevelt’s visit (Figure 25).

¹⁹⁰ *Centennial*, p. 187.

¹⁹¹ *Centennial*, p. 187.

¹⁹² *Centennial*, p. 187.

¹⁹³ *Centennial*, p. 189.

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The mausoleum itself, dating from 1928, is a handsome, cubical structure of five large courses of ashlar granite masonry with elements of the Art Deco modernism of the day. On the white marble slab that encloses Cermak's tomb is an inscription of his famous words to Roosevelt, "I am glad it was me instead of you."

Grave Markers

By 1973, the Bohemian National Cemetery had already recorded its 100,000th burial.¹⁹⁴ The current estimate of entombments by the superintendent of the cemetery is 110,000. Naturally, the oldest markers, representing late nineteenth-century styles, are found in the original section. The inscriptions on the stones nicely illustrate the evolution of the Czech-American community in Chicago with those in the original section, often in Czech, representing the first generation of immigrants and those in the latter additions to the cemetery more likely to be in English representing the gradual assimilation of the population. As the twentieth century progressed, the cemetery also became less exclusively ethnic, so that the outer areas contain the tombs of individuals of a wide variety of religions and ethnic origins.

Of the many styles of grave markers, two types are notable. First, the cemetery contains a very large number of a distinctive Victorian type of funerary monument: the cut tree. This type, most often in limestone, takes the form of a cut or shattered tree trunk, often with additional stubs of broken tree limbs. They vary in size from images of short stumps to monumental ten or fifteen foot representations of entire trunks. Often, images of mushrooms dot the base, and vines or various type of ivy appear to creep up and around the trunks. Carvings of laurel wreaths, symbols of triumph and eternity, because their leaves never wilt, often surround the stub of a limb. Typically a portion of the bark appears to be peeled back, in order to provide a smooth surface for inscriptions, images, and symbols. In many cases, they serve as markers for family plots, so that smaller markers may be arrayed around them and inscriptions may be added to the trunk as needed.

Although often doted with stock imagery, each marker of this type is apparently custom cut (no two are exactly alike), and thus the iconography is flexible, a virtue here, since the cemetery serves the religious and the atheistic alike. The Kučera family marker of c. 1892, in section J (Figure 26), for instance, has no religious symbols or emblems. In this case, the iconography involves death—or more particularly, life cut short by death, as symbolized by the shattered tree trunk and the potted lily that has tumbled over to the left. The mushrooms and creeping ivy that encircles the trunk symbolize the eternal cycle of life and death. The clasped hands, one-third of the way up the front of the trunk, indicate that the marker memorializes a married couple, joined first in matrimony, then in death. A carving of a wreath surrounds a broken limb at the center-right. Occasionally, although not here, tree-trunk markers without explicitly religious imagery display fraternal symbols. The Broznik family marker of circa 1896, in section N (Figure 27), on the other hand, incorporates specifically Roman Catholic iconography, in the form of the crucifix at the top front. In this instance, the reference is to the wood of the cross, the Christian instrument of salvation and eternal life. The fallen lily at the

¹⁹⁴ *Centennial*, p. 511.

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base reinforces the theme of life cut short, while the vine and ivy imagery symbolize new life from death. The marker also memorializes a married couple with the clasped hands emblem, and it includes a laurel wreath at the left-center.

The second notable marker type is the image of the standing soldier. This type became popular at the time of World War I, and most were erected over the tombs of soldiers and sailors who died in service during that war, although they, too, may be the central marker of a family plot. Being of a slightly later type, they are mainly found in a fringe around the original grounds. Many are of limestone and marble, rather than granite, and so have not weathered well. They are another indication of the immigrant patriotism of the Czech-Americans in Chicago, which had such a strong impact on the cemetery in the form of its war memorials. They again call to mind the words of the president of the cemetery association, Joseph Matousek, on Memorial Day, 1892, at the dedication of the Civil War Memorial: "We are Americans and love this new country, not only with words, but with deeds, as this monument proves."¹⁹⁵

The Janeček family marker in section 15 (Figure 28) and the Zelenka family marker in section 20 (Figure 29) are generally characteristic of this type. They memorialize Jan Janeček and Václav J. Sibrava, who died in World War I, in 1919 and 1918, respectively. Both monuments stand at the center of family plots and are surrounded by the smaller headstones of individual family members. Both limestone figures stand proud and erect in a formal, frontal, military pose on a low base that surmounts a tall, rectangular pedestal of granite. Each shows the deceased soldier in the characteristic uniform of his branch of the armed forces and with appropriate attributes such as field glasses, rifles, rucksacks, etc., some of which are designed to buttress the figure at the delicate ankles. There is a certain pensiveness or meditative quality to each figure's facial features, as if they, like the visitor, ponder the mysteries of life and death. It is also worth noting that on their bases, these two monuments feature another popular, although more minor, form of remembrance found in the cemetery on markers: small, oval, porcelain enamel photographic portraits of the deceased. The Janeček marker has porcelain portraits of seven members of the family, the last who died in 1967.

By its centennial year of 1976, as recorded in its official history, the Bohemian National Cemetery contained a total of 13,926 burial lots, 12,077 of which had been sold. Burials totaled 102,355 and cremations 11,982. The Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum contained 2,016 crypts, 1,141 of which had been sold, and 367 total niches, 280 of which had been sold.¹⁹⁶ In his concluding chapter, the author of the centennial history, James V. Krakora, summarized the history of the cemetery and the cemetery association in words that still apply:

The history of the 100 years of the Bohemian National Cemetery Association can only serve to prove without any question of a doubt, that the Association, of all the Czech and Slovak organizations in the

¹⁹⁵ *Centennial*, p. 29.

¹⁹⁶ *Centennial*, p. 514-515.

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United States, has been the greatest benefactor in providing financial support and assistance in all fields of endeavor of the Czechoslovak people in America and to all charitable, educational, fraternal, cultural, physical fitness, nationalistic and other organizations and programs conducted to promote the best interests, the welfare and the good name and reputation of the Czech and Slovak people of America. We have documented the direct financial contributions of more than three quarters of a million dollars by the Association in support of these activities, asking nothing in return except the patronage of the Czech and Slovak people in their burial requirements.

He then added:

In the Bohemian National Cemetery Association there has been erected a permanent, untarnished memorial and monument to that heritage, to the great contributions which the people of Czechoslovak birth and extraction have made to the growth and progress of the United States of America as the greatest and most progressive nation on this earth. As we are to be proud to be Americans, proud of its noble principles of freedom, equality, justice and democracy, so are we to be proud descendants of the Czechoslovak nation, founded on these same principles, and to exert every effort to protect to the utmost against all enemies from both without and within our American principles and our American way of life, and to do our utmost to assist in the restoration of freedom and independence to the country of our forefathers.¹⁹⁷

The Bohemian National Cemetery is remarkably intact with excellent integrity and possesses both historical and architectural significance.

¹⁹⁷ *Centennial*, p. 514-515.

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Geographical Data

UTM-Zone 16

1. 439659E
4647919N
2. 440264E
4647919N
3. 440279E
4647330N
4. 440477E
4647330N
5. 440482E
4647117N
6. 439669E
4647117N

Boundary Description

The west side of the cemetery is marked by Pulaski Road and the Main Gate of the cemetery. The south side of the cemetery is marked by Foster Road. The east side runs along the line of North Central Park Avenue abutting the property line of Northeastern Illinois University. The north side of the cemetery is marked by Bryn Mawr Avenue. The entirety of the cemetery is marked off by a green iron fence.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises the entirety of the cemetery including the original 50 acres off of Pulaski Road, the 60 acres of land purchased in 1905 and subsequent land purchases. The boundaries encompass all the buildings, structures and monuments in the cemetery, contributing and non-contributing. The nominated area of the cemetery contains 126 acres.

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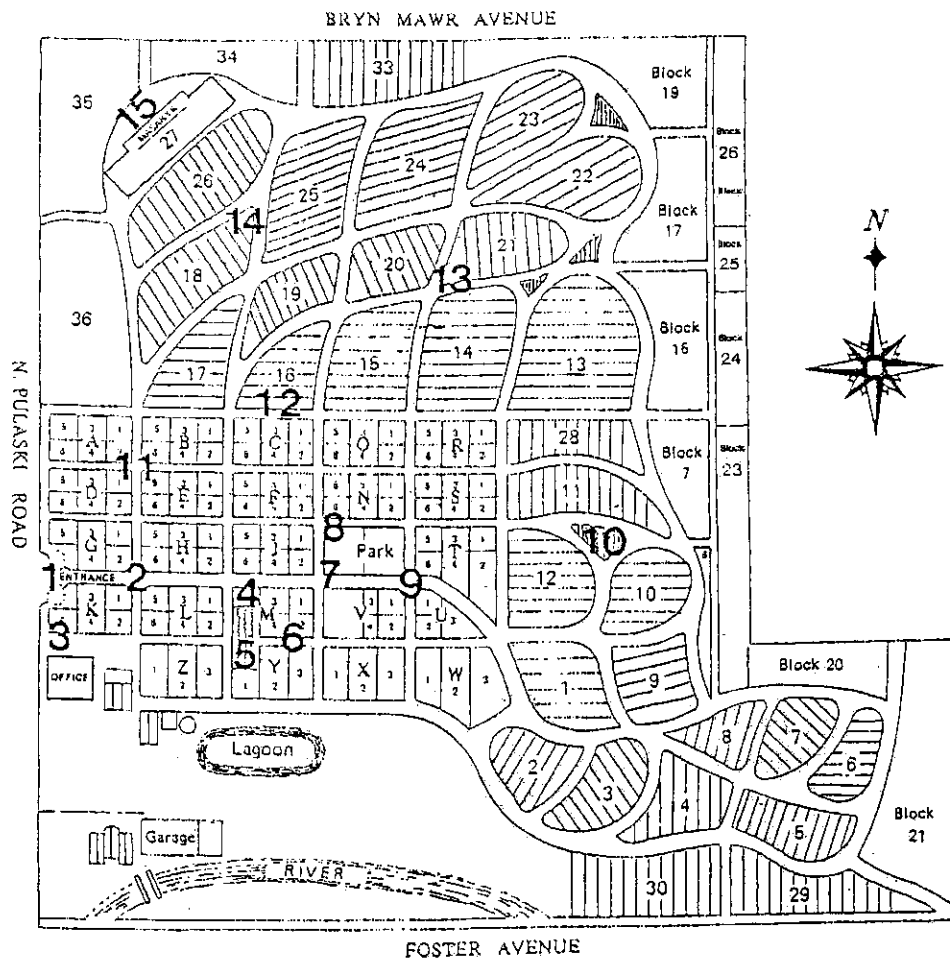
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Figure 1. Map and legend of the Bohemian National Cemetery

MAP AND LEGEND OF BOHEMIAN NATIONAL CEMETERY



1. Cemetery entrance.
2. Flag pole honoring veterans of WWI and WWII.
3. Grave of Joseph Lahvic--first grave digger at the cemetery.
4. Statue of *The Mother* by Anton Polasek, erected in 1927.
5. Crematory Building, erected in 1913.
6. The Kolar family mausoleum--landlords to Mrs. O'Leary of Chicago Fire fame.
7. Plaque honoring N. Brada--whose was the first burial at the cemetery.
8. The Odd Fellows Monument.
9. Civil War Veterans Memorial, dedicated on May 29, 1892.
10. Spanish War Memorial--known as *The Hiker*.
11. Klacel Circle, with tombs of some of the guiding forces of Czech-American History:
 Vaclav Pohl, first president of the Czechoslovak Societies of America
 Frank Zdrubek, the founder of the Bohemian National Cemetery Association
 Frank Boucek, president of the cemetery from 1932-1944
 Robert Vickers, author of the "History of Bohemia"
12. Section 16, with tombs of victims of the "Eastland" disaster of July 24, 1915.
13. Cermak family mausoleum.
14. Second version of *The Mother* statue, by Anton Polasek.
15. The Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum--dedicated to the memory of T.G. Masaryk, founder and first president of the Czechoslovak Republic.

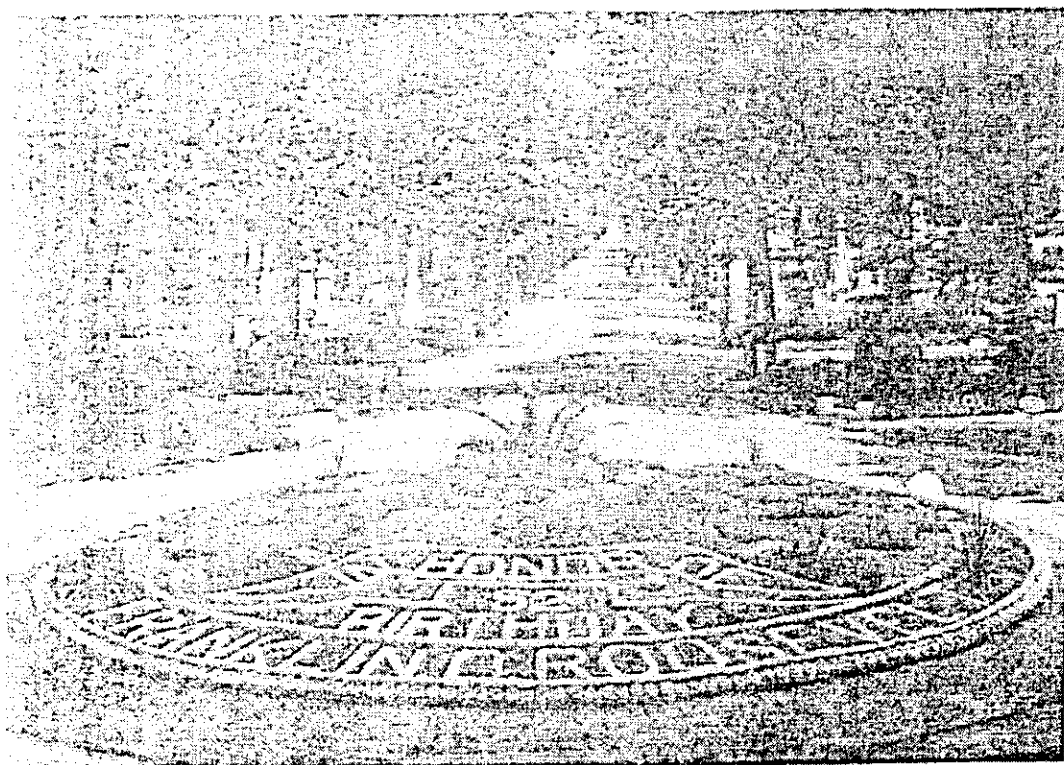


Figure 2. Historical photograph of the first circle of the Benes plat, circa 1934

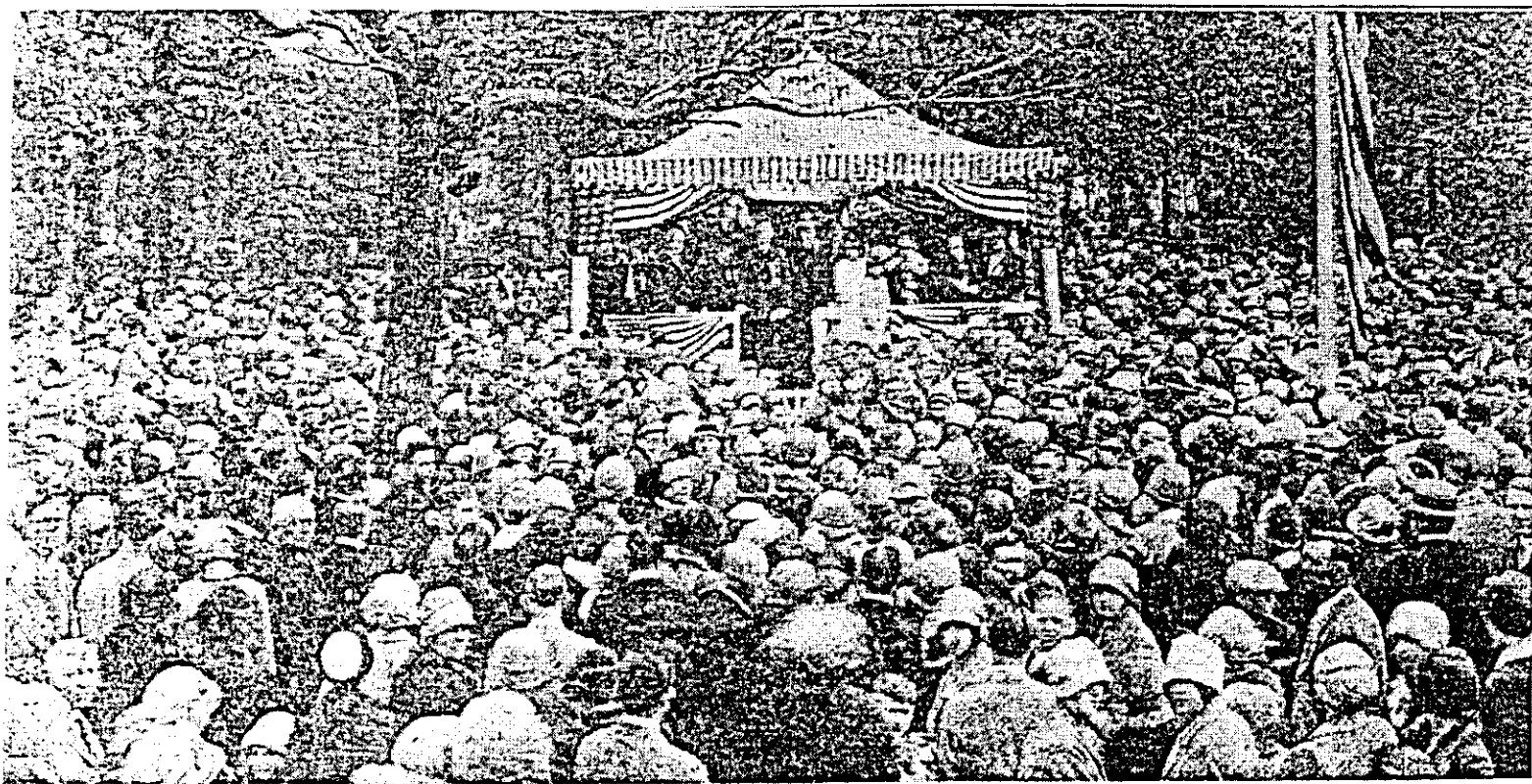


Figure 3. Historical photograph of the Park in the cemetery, 1927

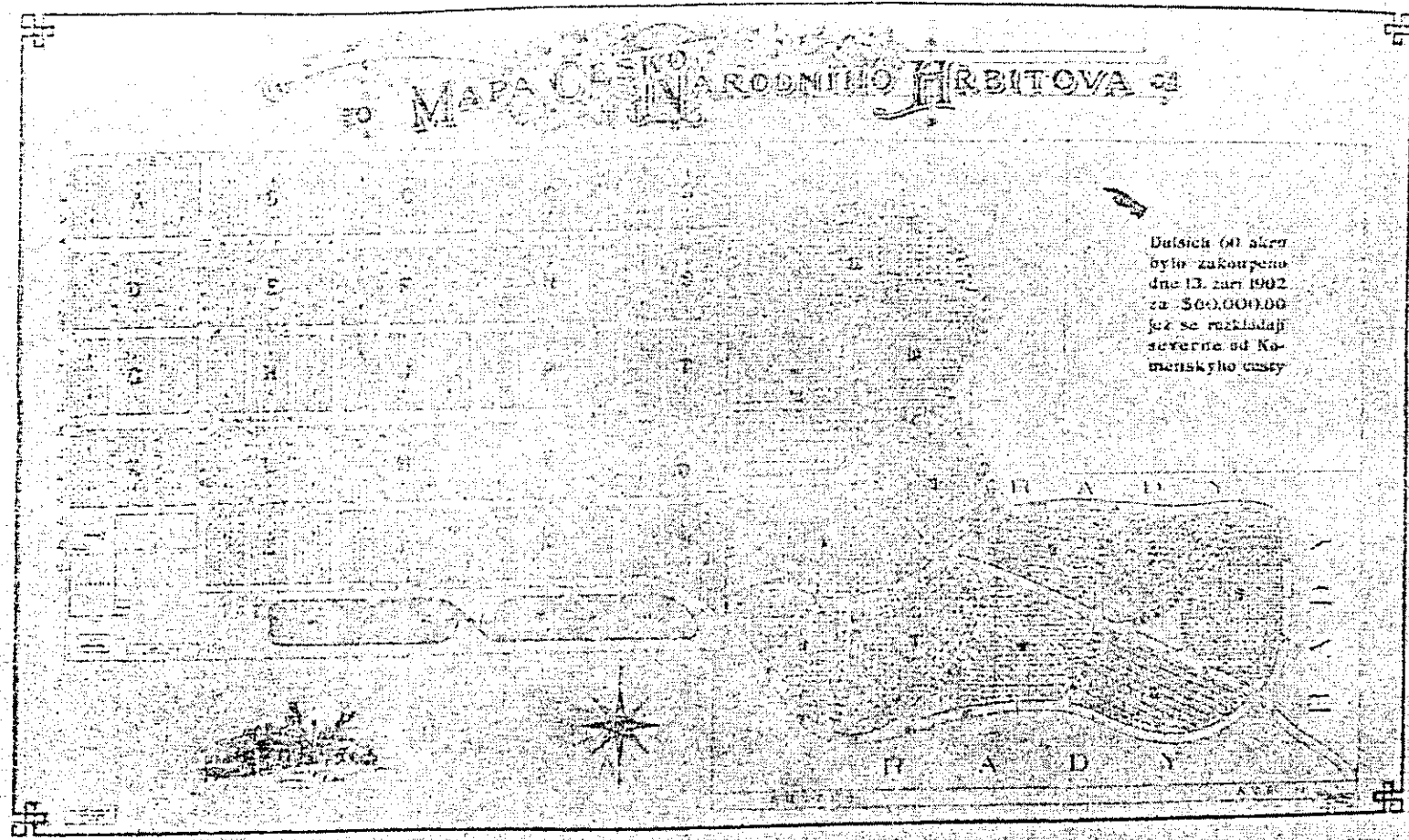


Figure 4. The 1902 map of Bohemian National Cemetery

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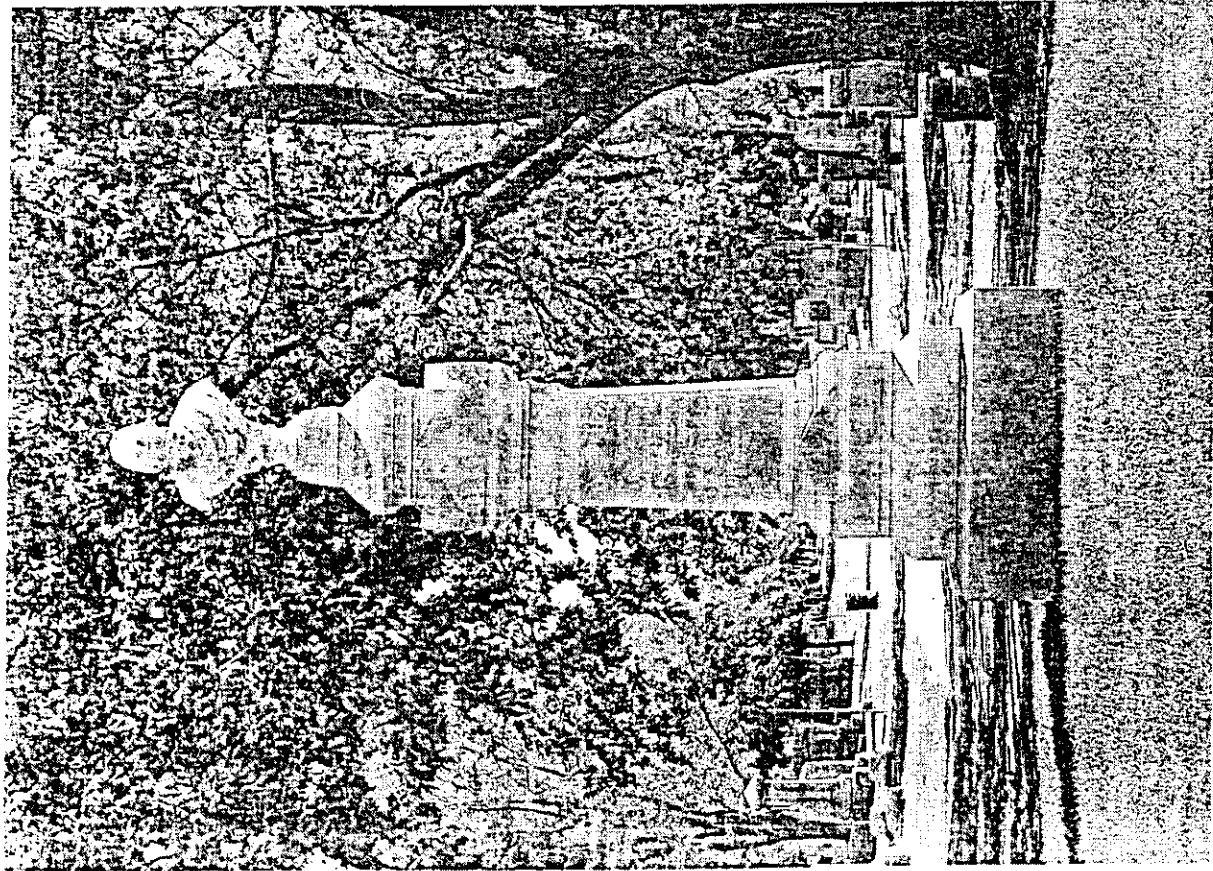


Figure 5. The Ladimir Klacel Monument, dedicated 1885

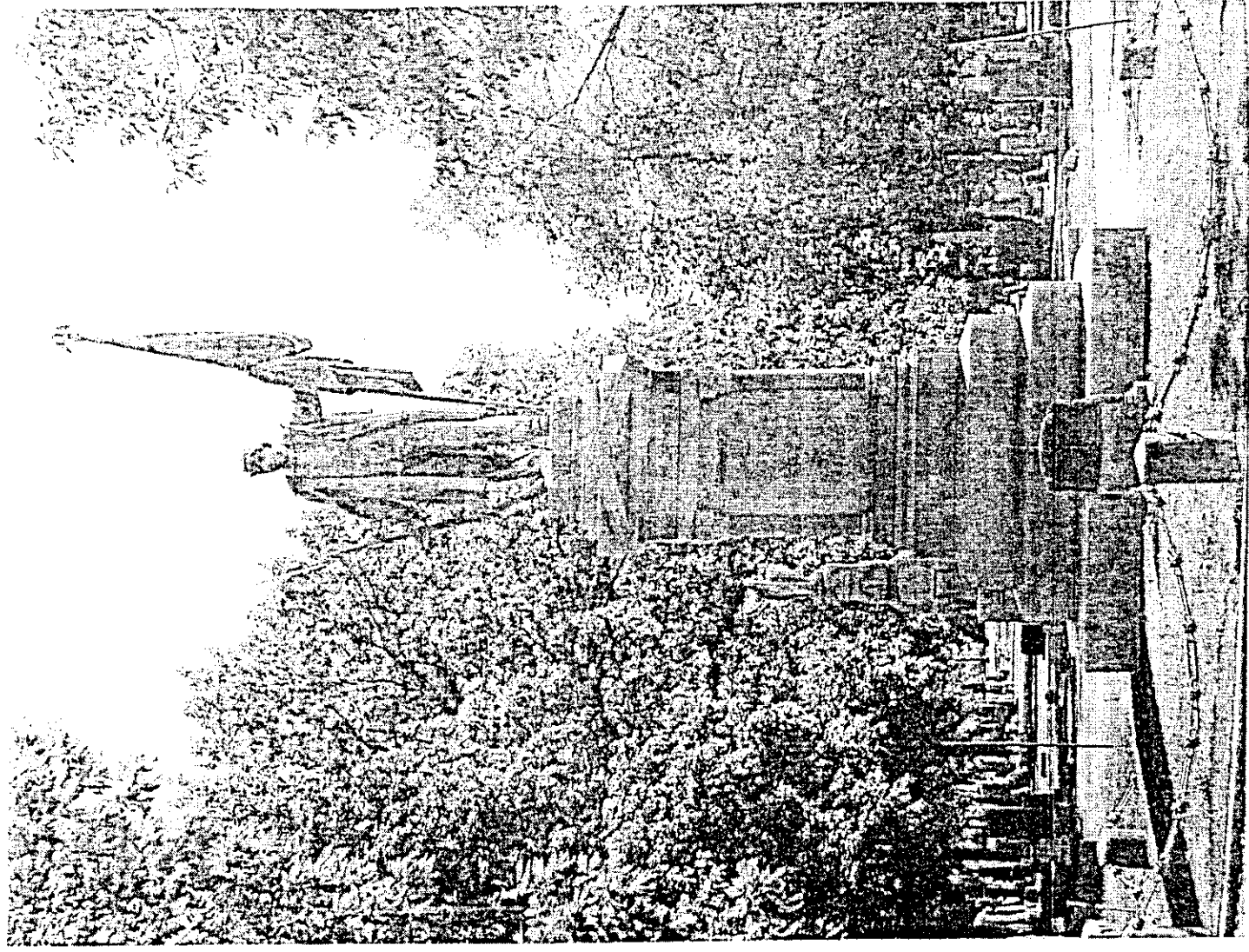


Figure 6. The Civil War Veterans Monument, dedicated 1892

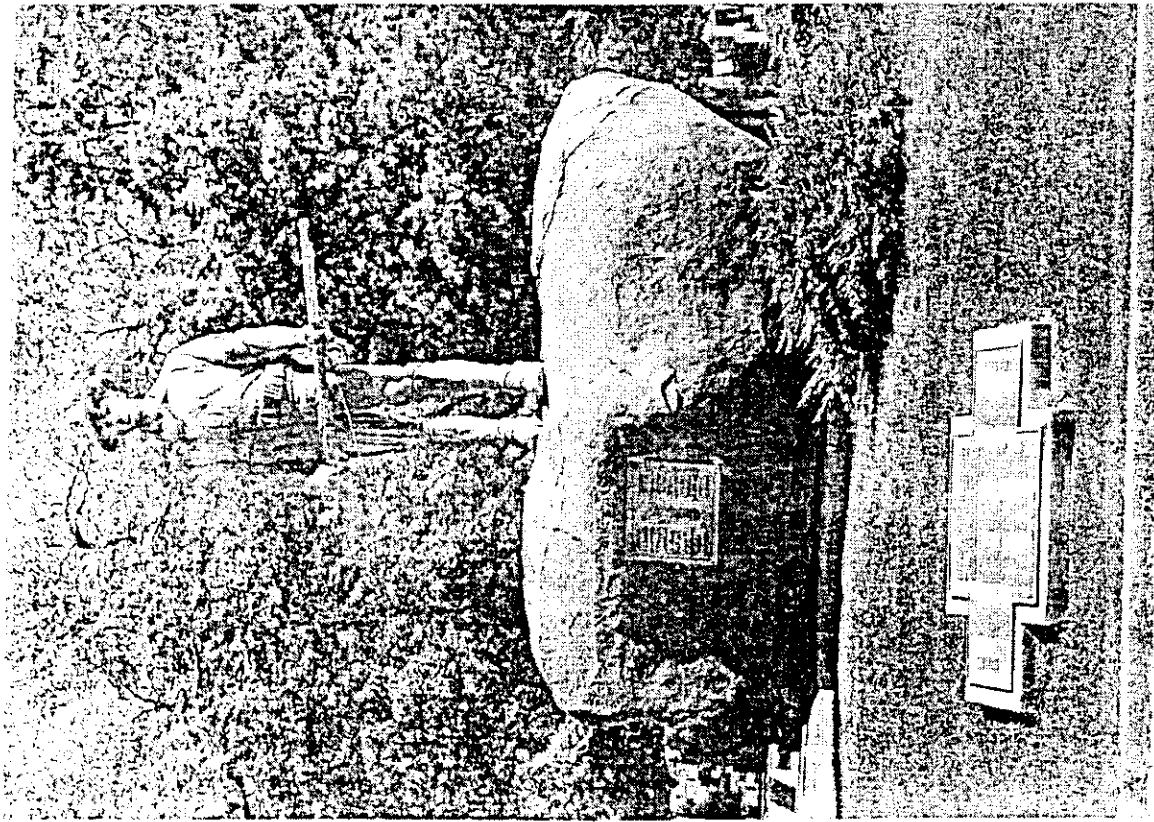


Figure 7. The United Spanish War Veterans Memorial, dedicated 1926

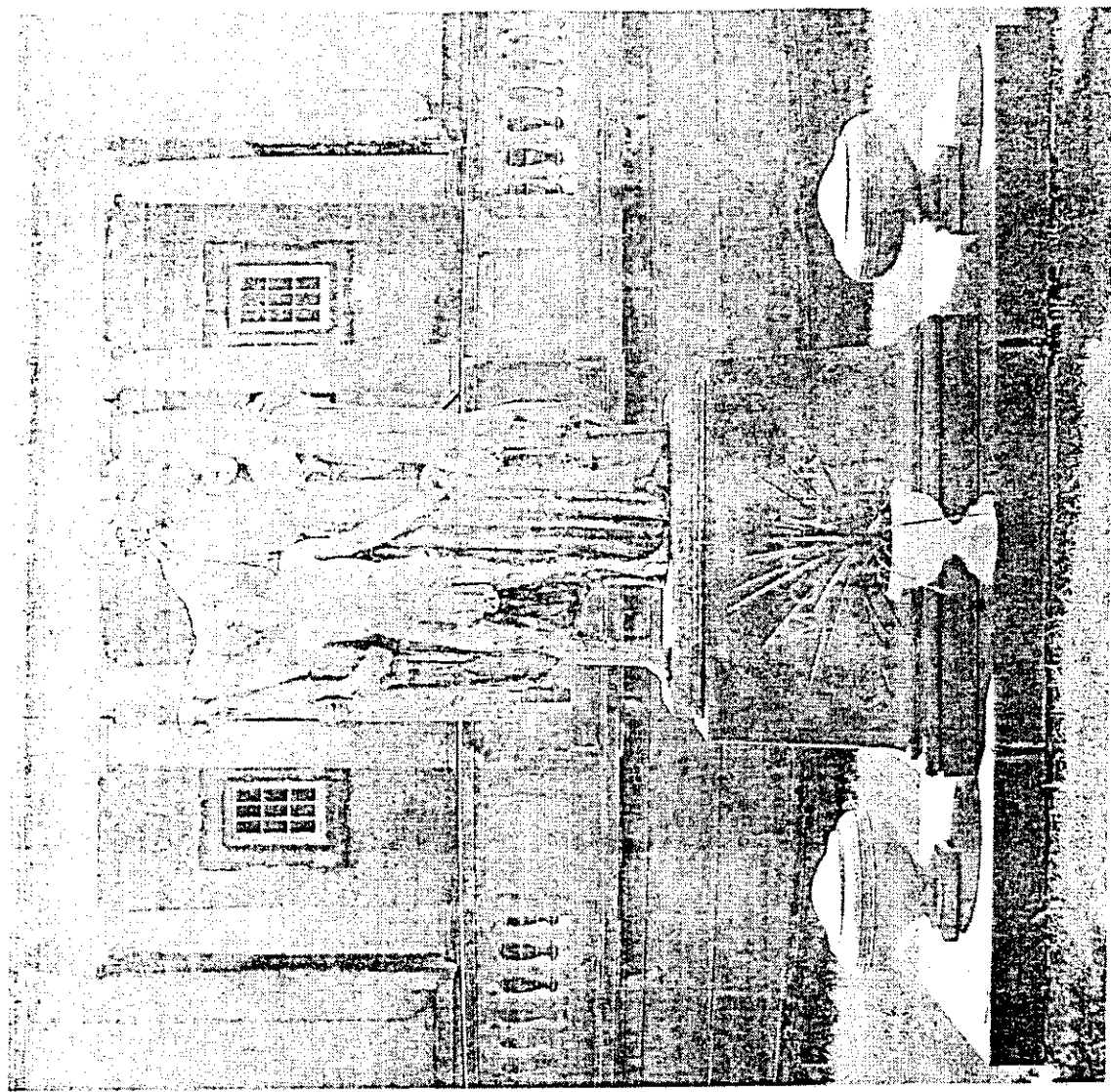


Figure 8. The Mother Monument, dedicated 1927

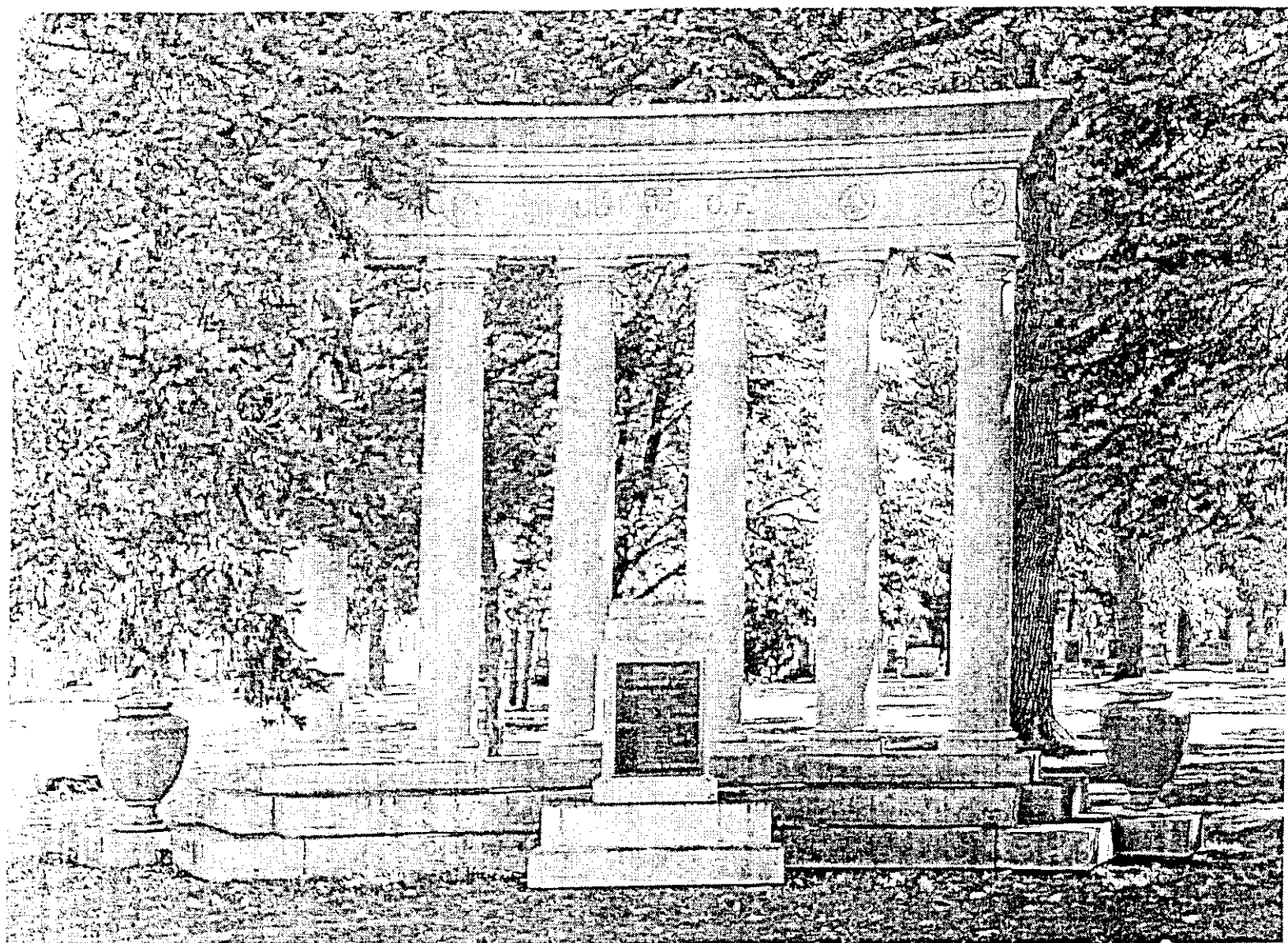


Figure 9. The Odd Fellows Monument, dedicated 1937

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

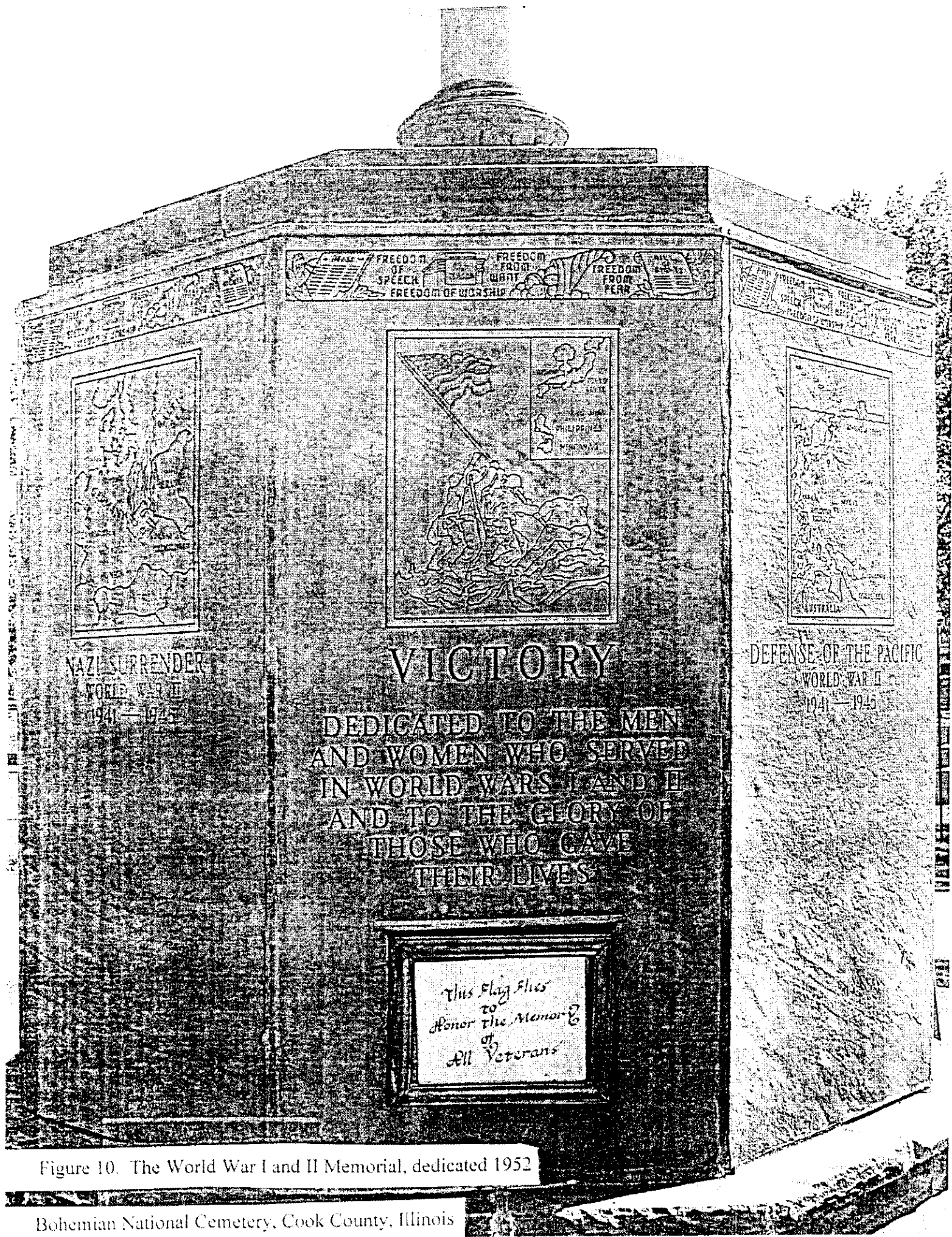


Figure 10. The World War I and II Memorial, dedicated 1952

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

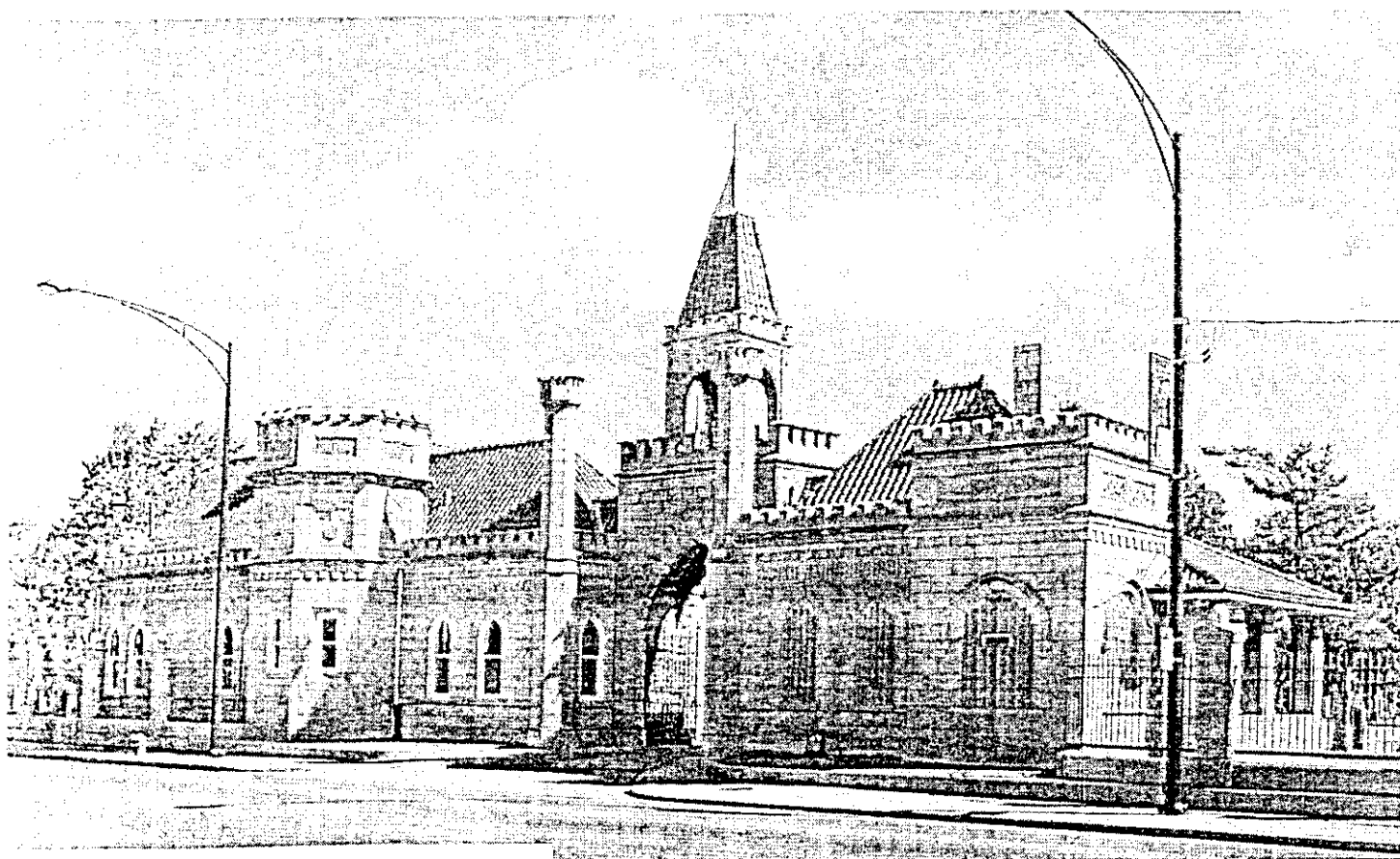


Figure 11a. The Main Gate from the west

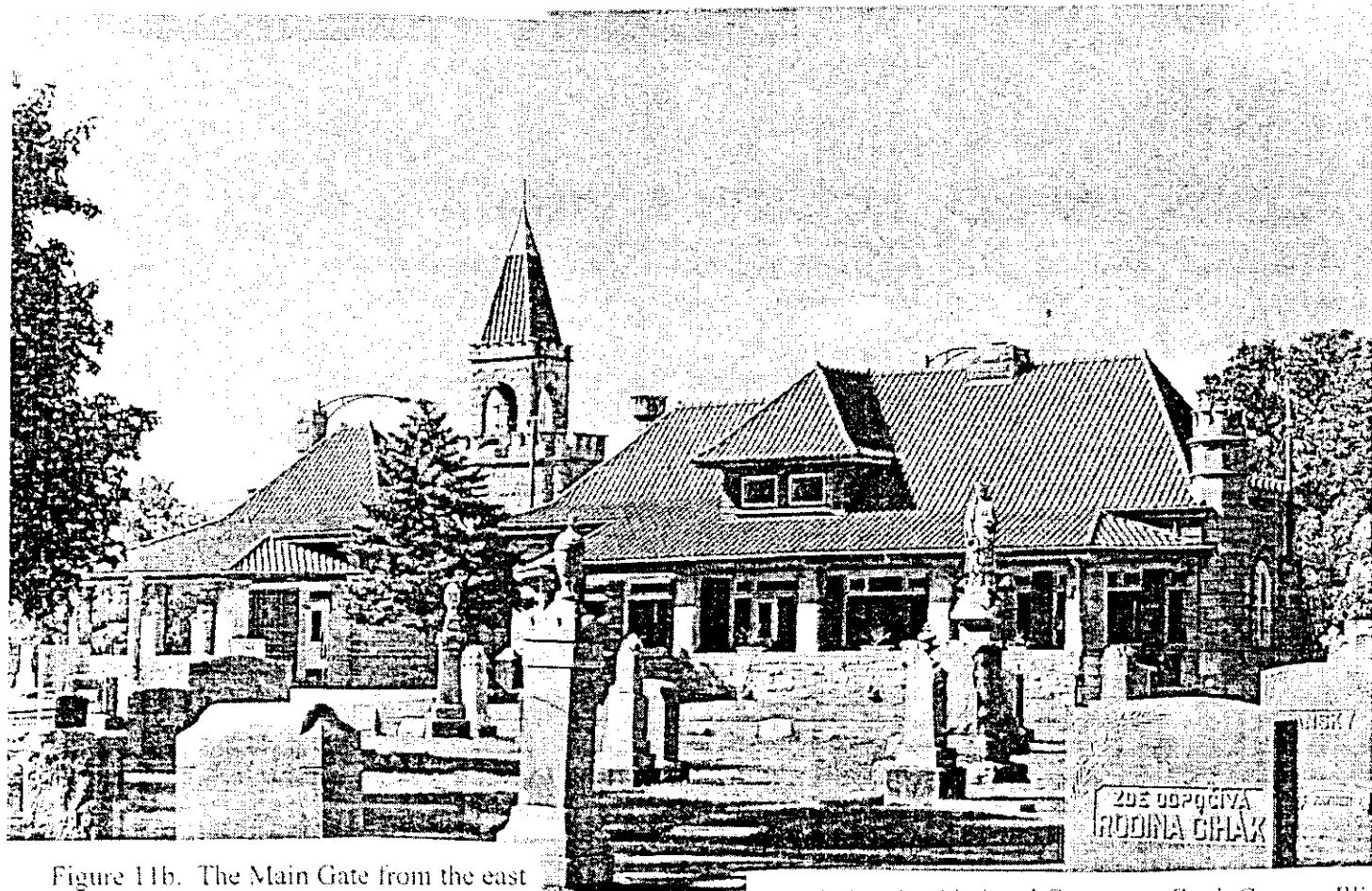


Figure 11b. The Main Gate from the east

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

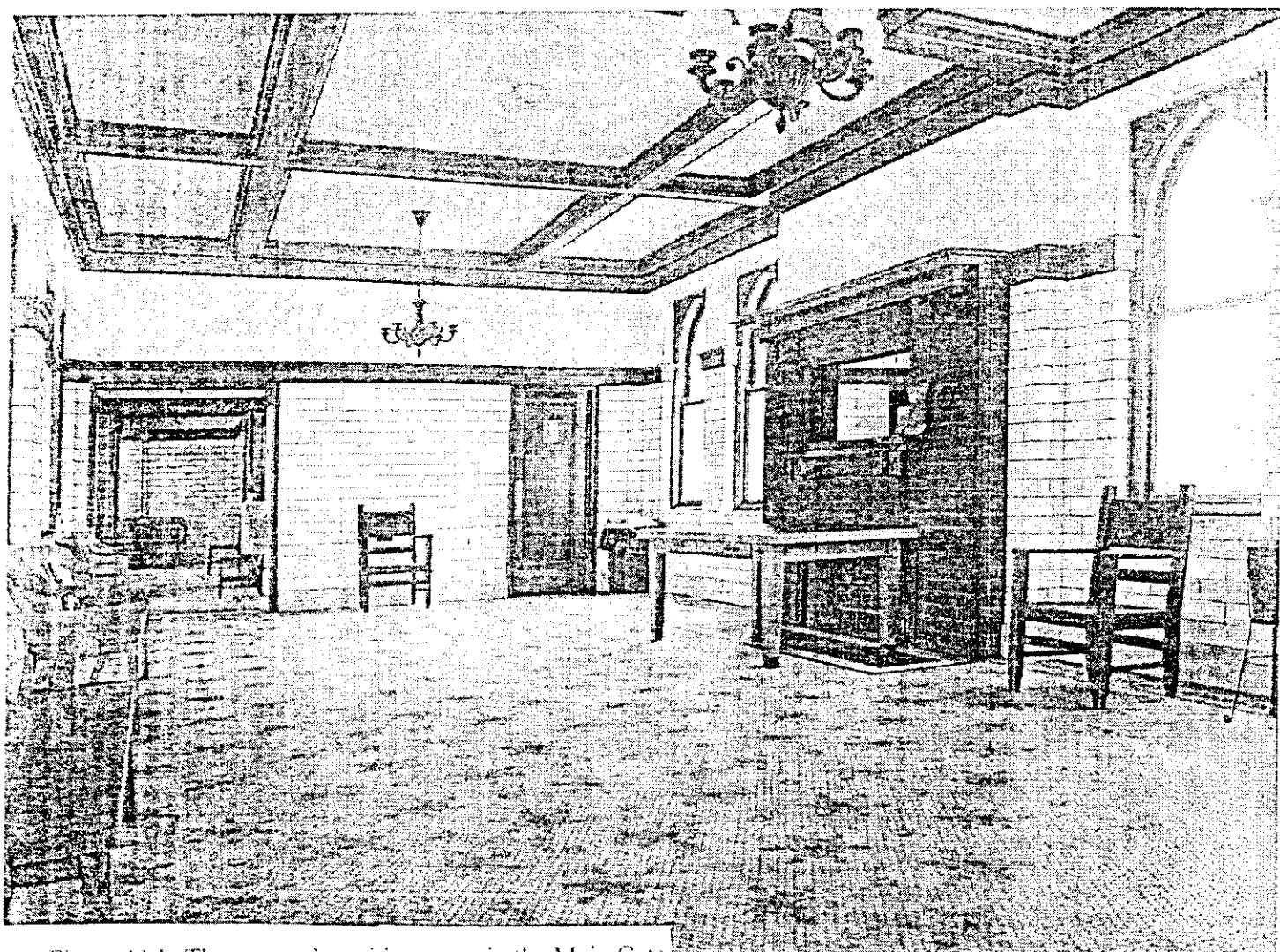


Figure 11d. The women's waiting room in the Main Gate

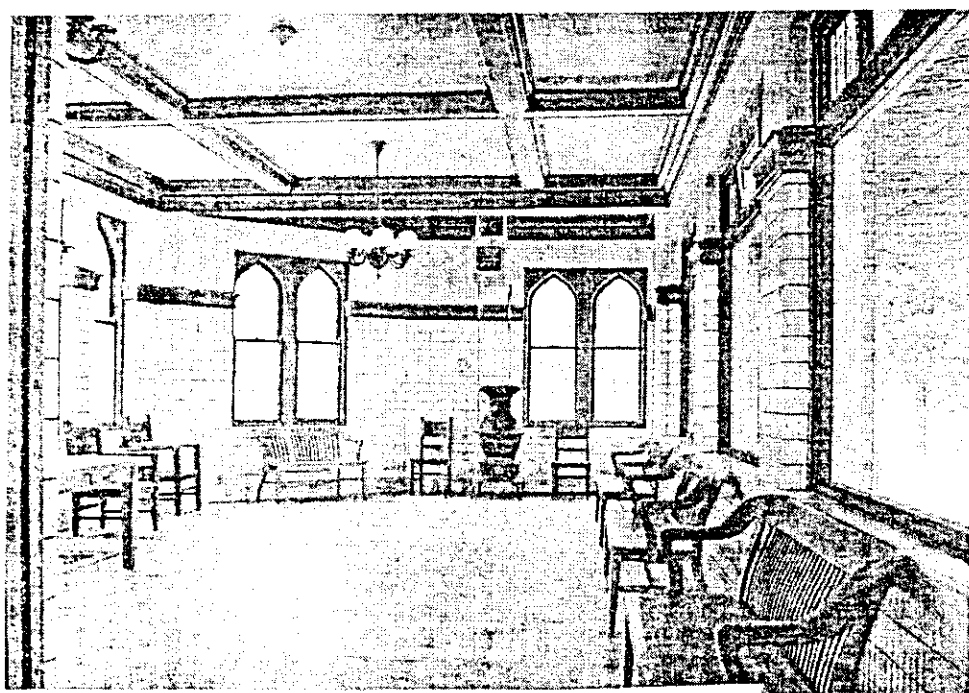


Figure 11e. The women's waiting room in the Main Gate

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

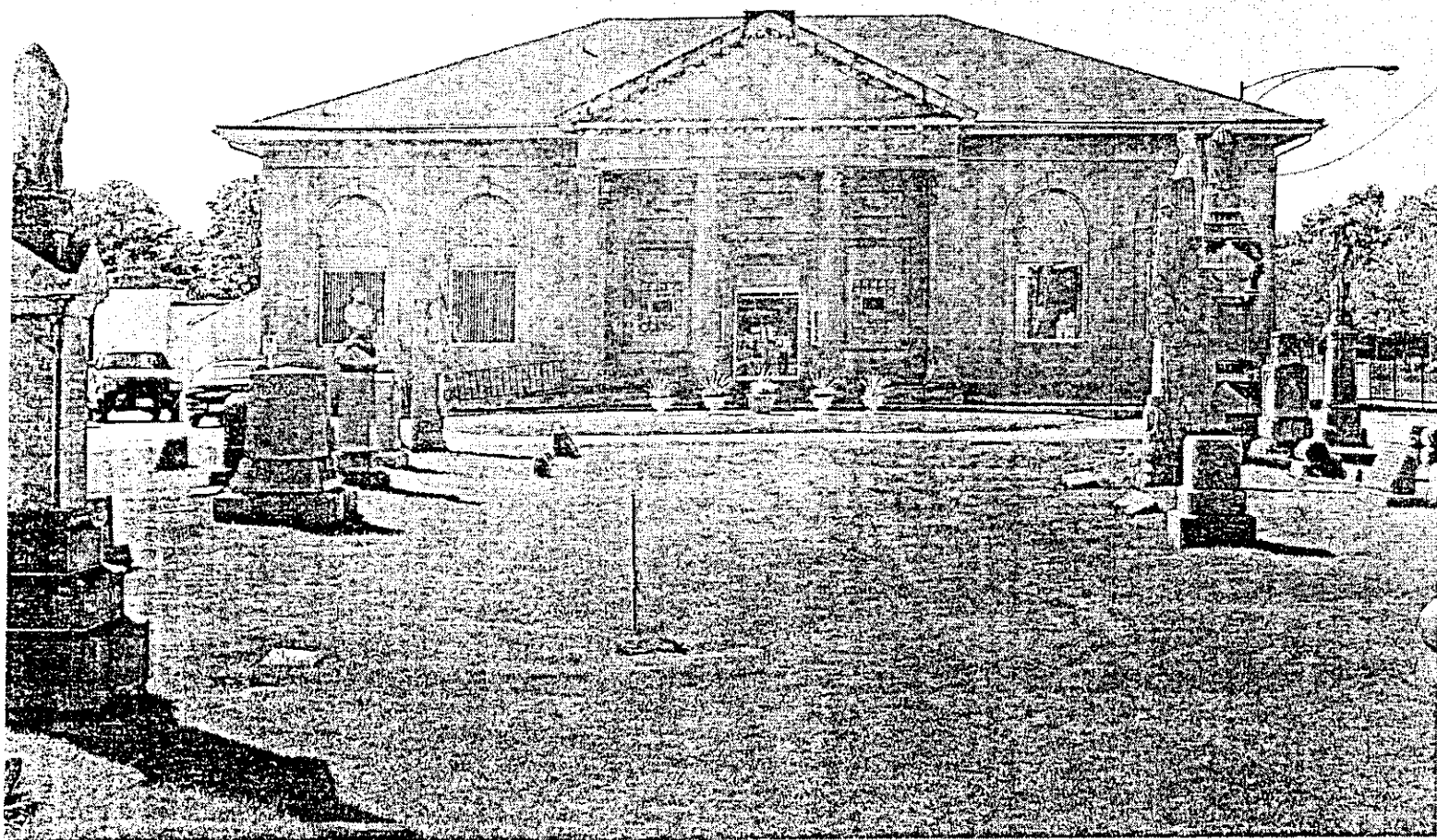


Figure 12a. The Administration Building from the north

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

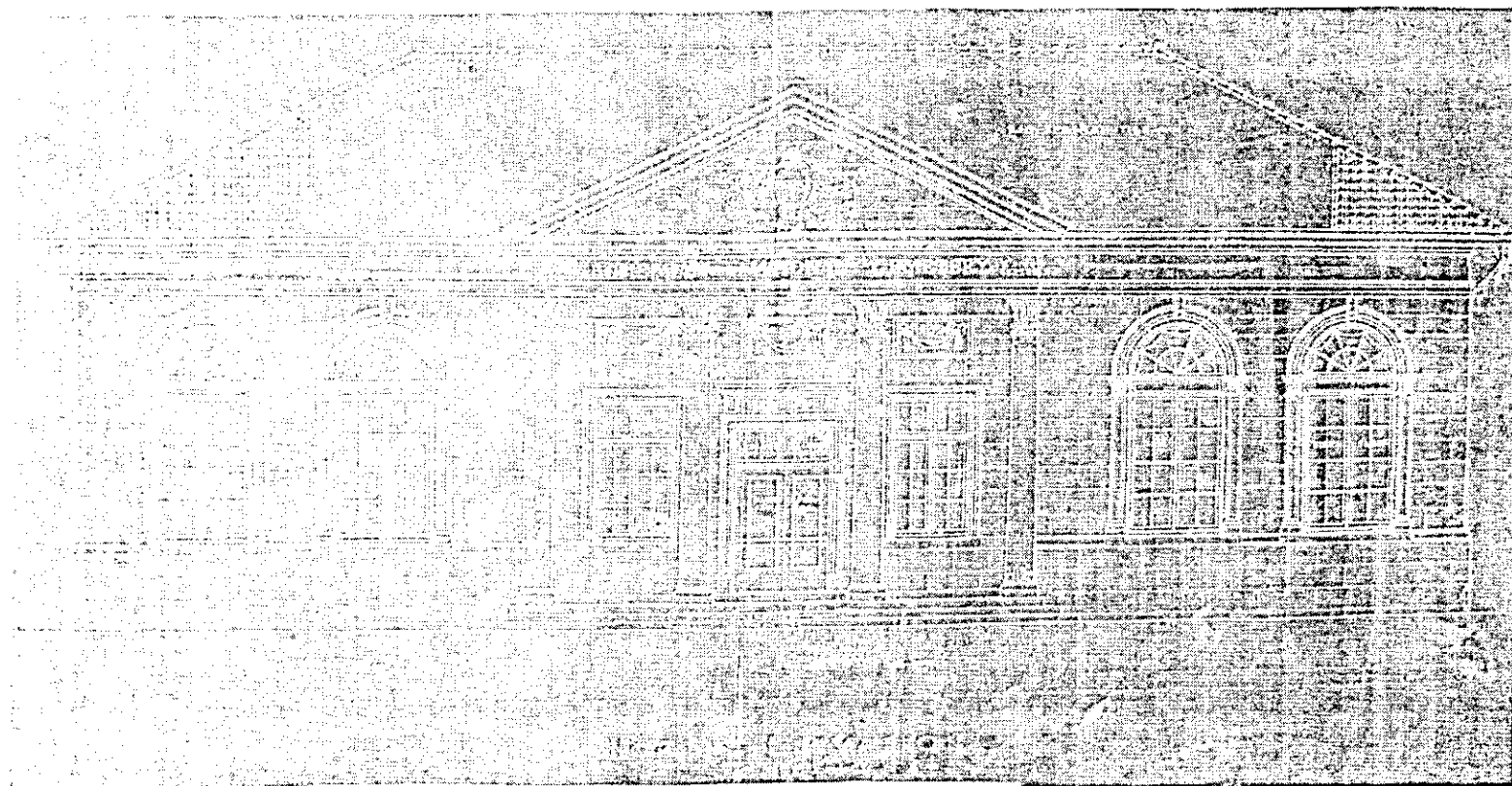


Figure 12b. Blueprint of the north elevation of the Administration Building

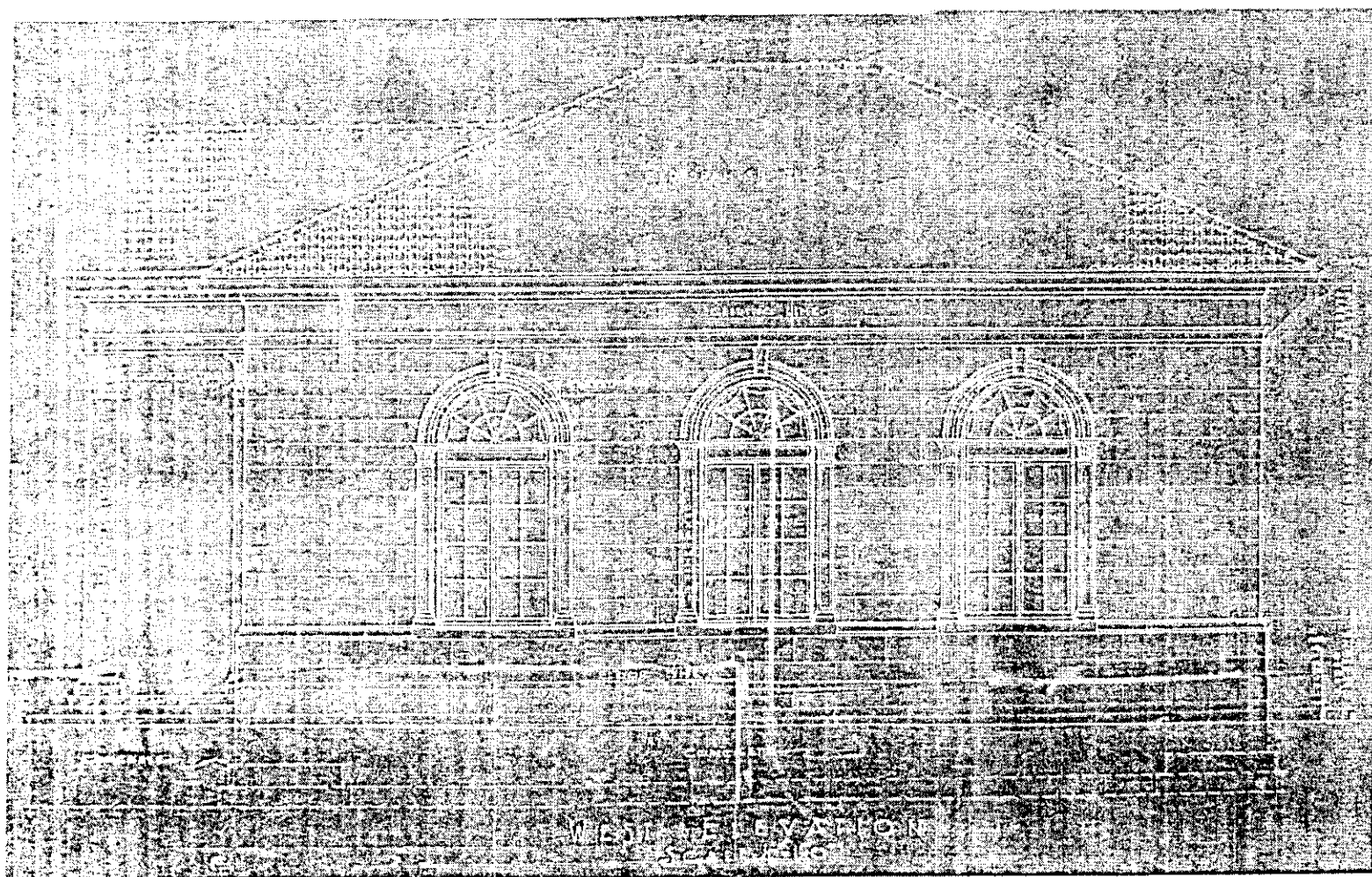


Figure 12c. Blueprint of the west elevation of the Administration Building

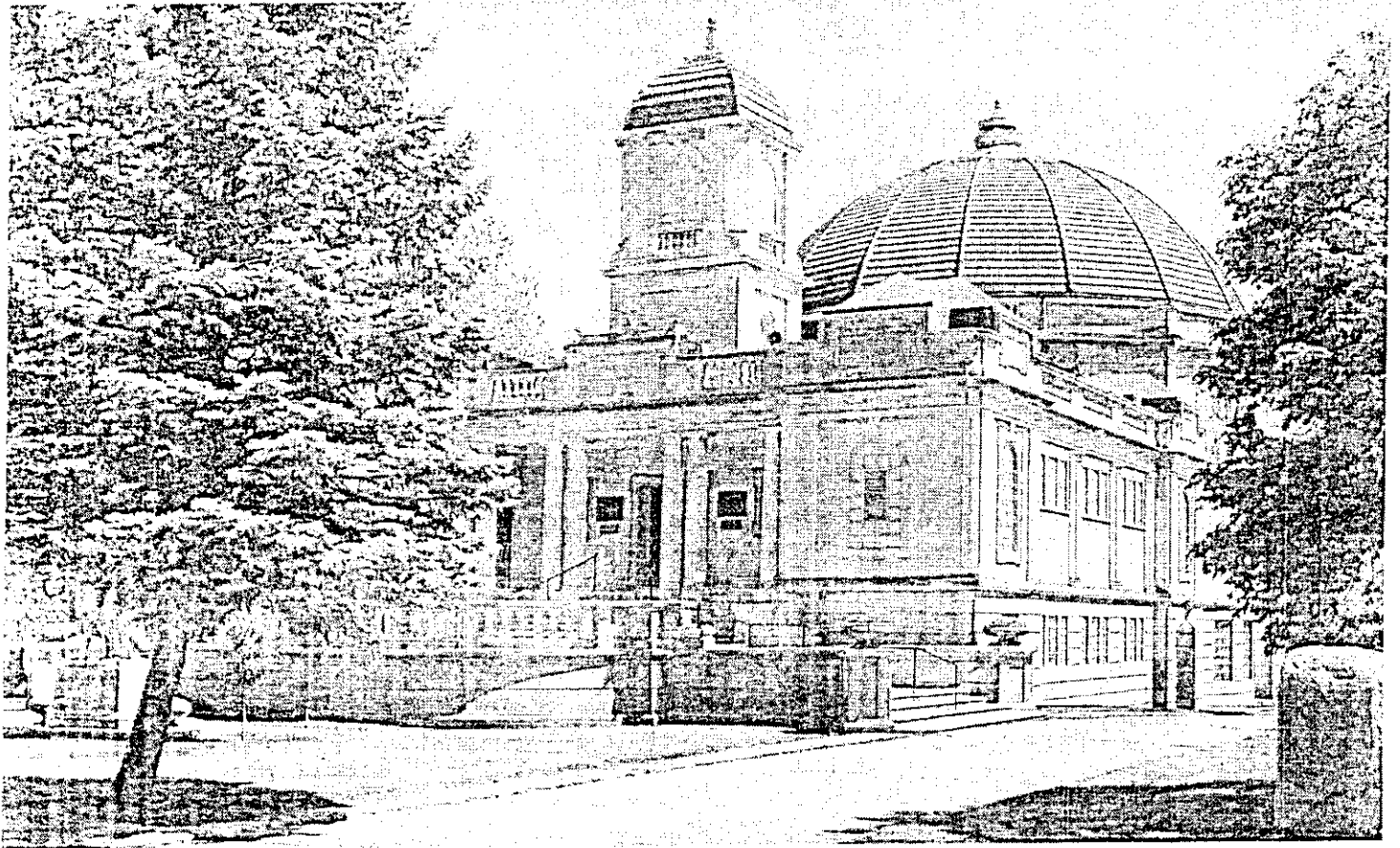


Figure 13b. The Crematory Building from the west

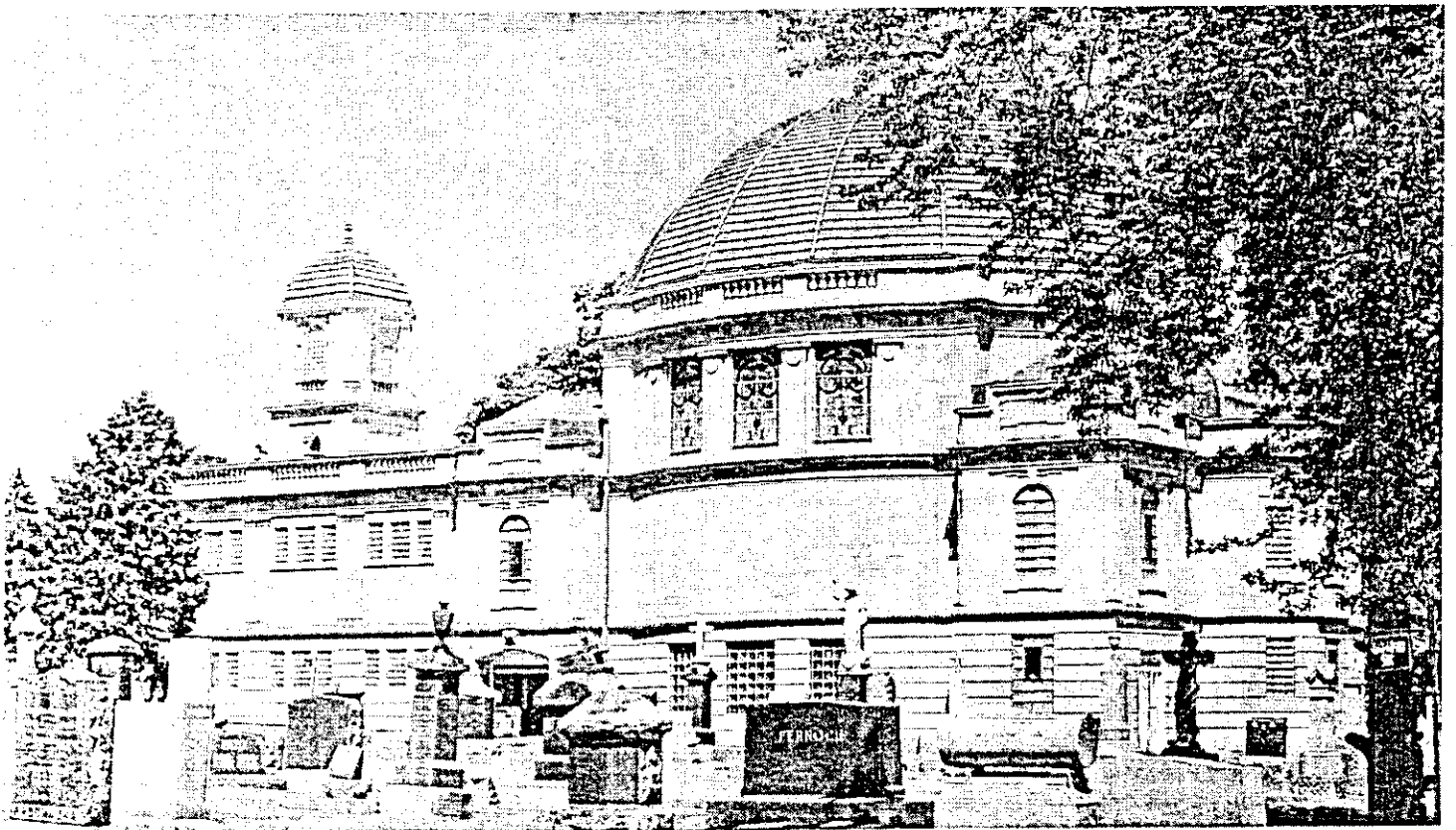


Figure 13a. The Crematory Building from the north

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

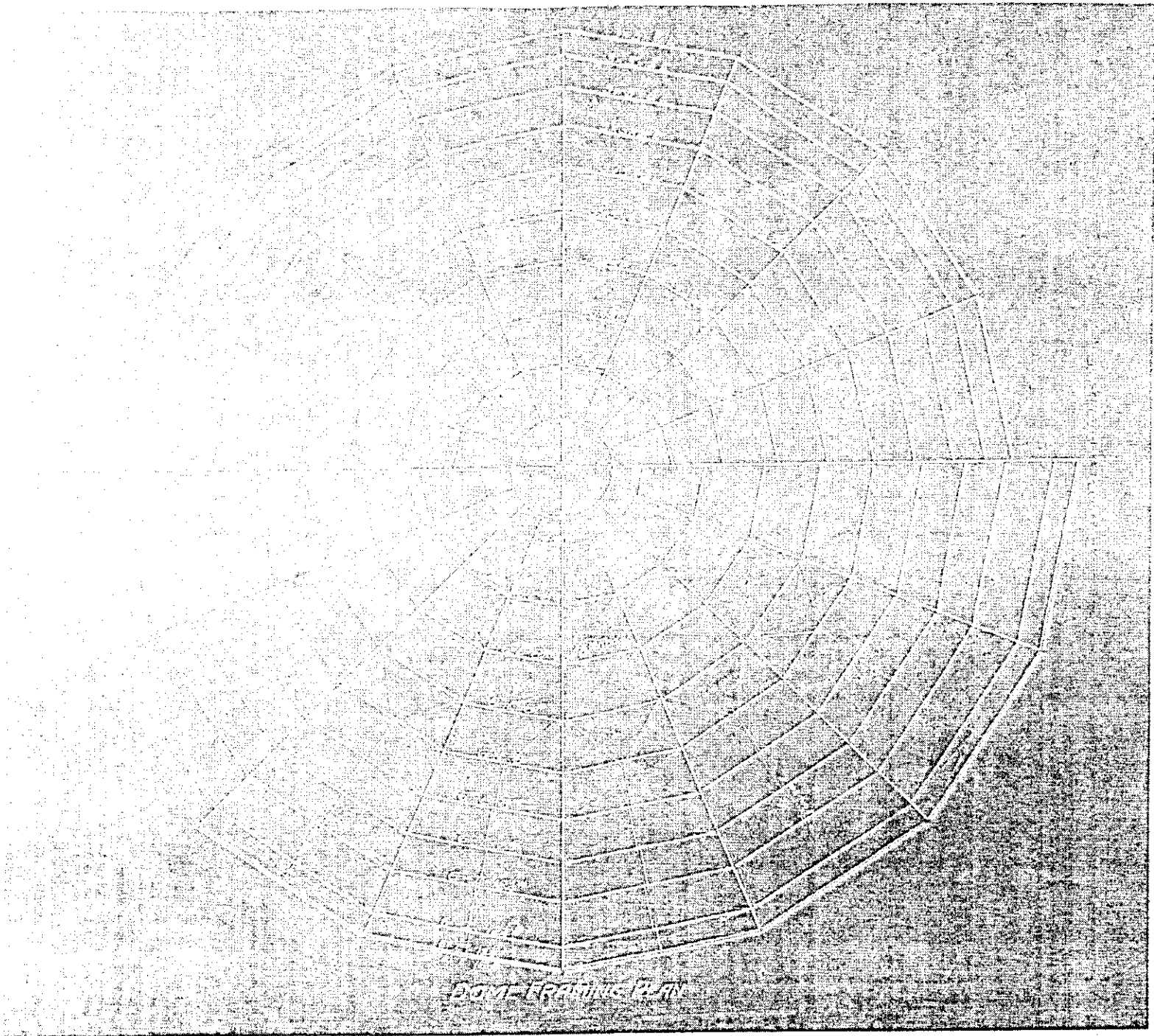


Figure 13c. Detail of the framing plan for the dome of the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

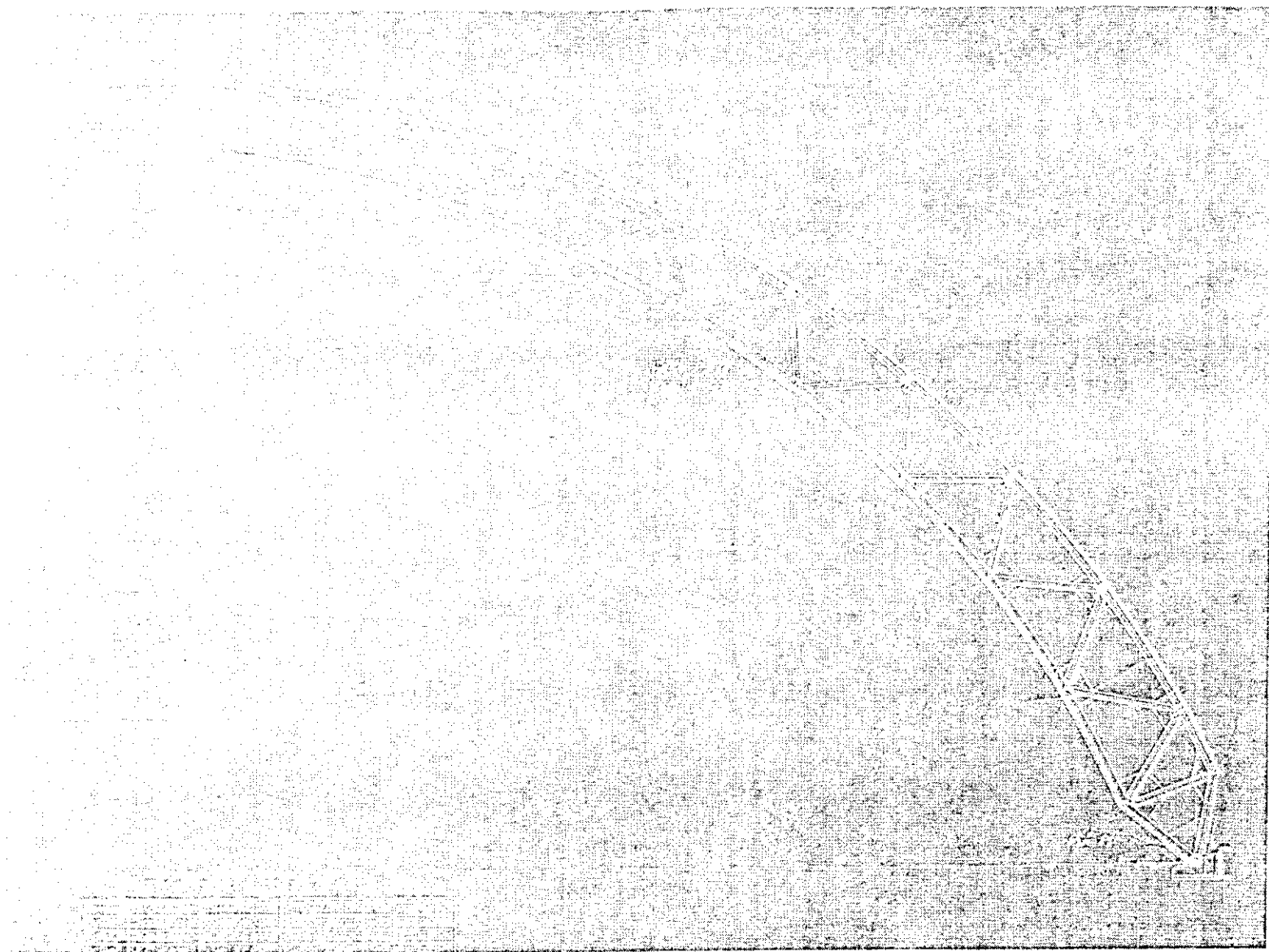


Figure 13d. Detail of the framing plan for the dome of the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

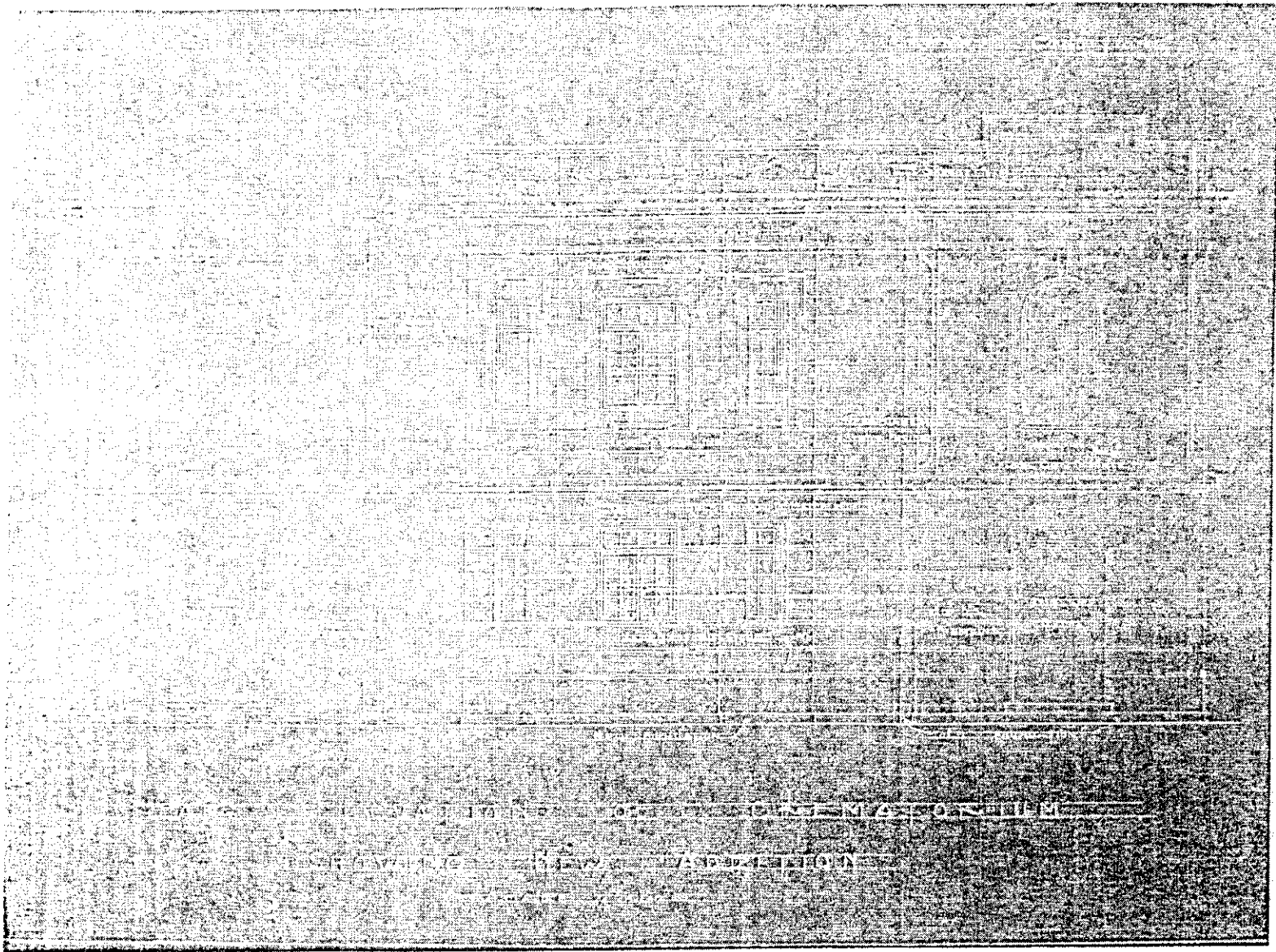


Figure 13e. Addition to the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

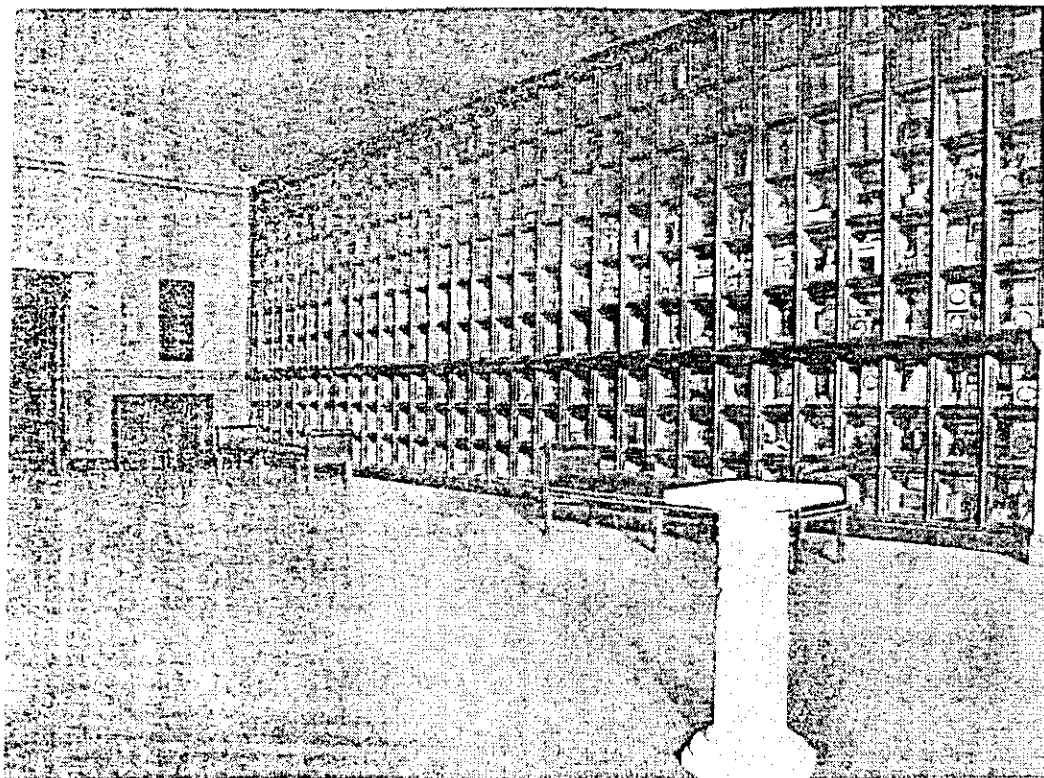


Figure 13f. The central columbarium in the Crematory Building

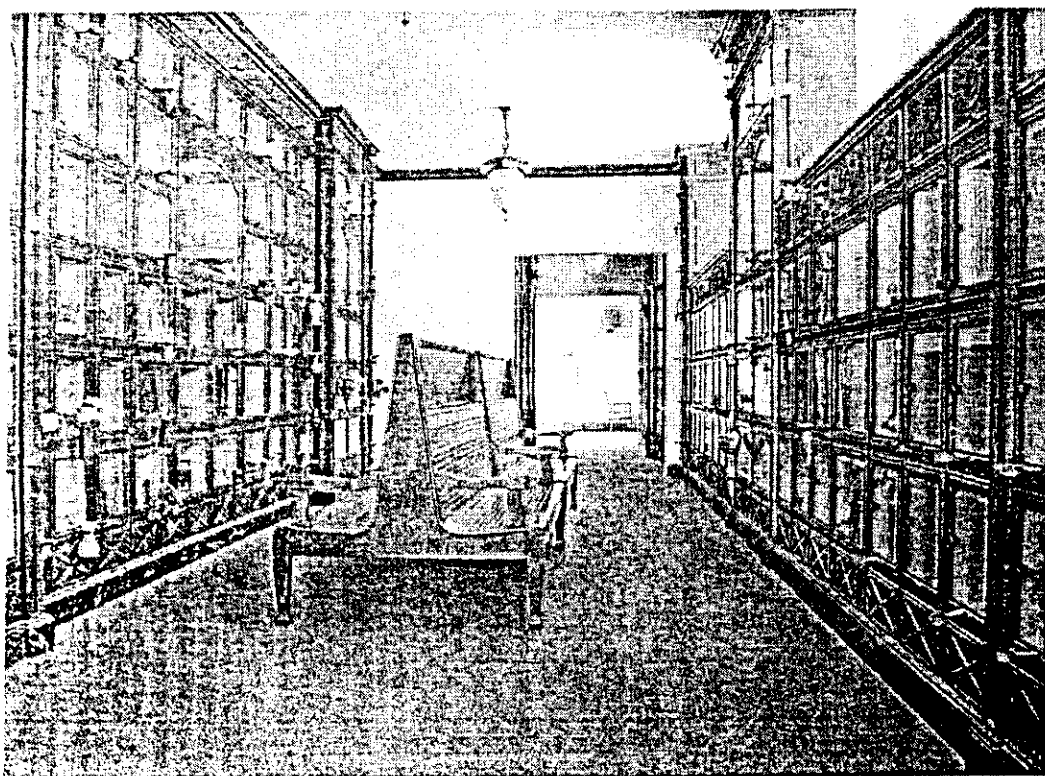


Figure 13g. The west columbarium in the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

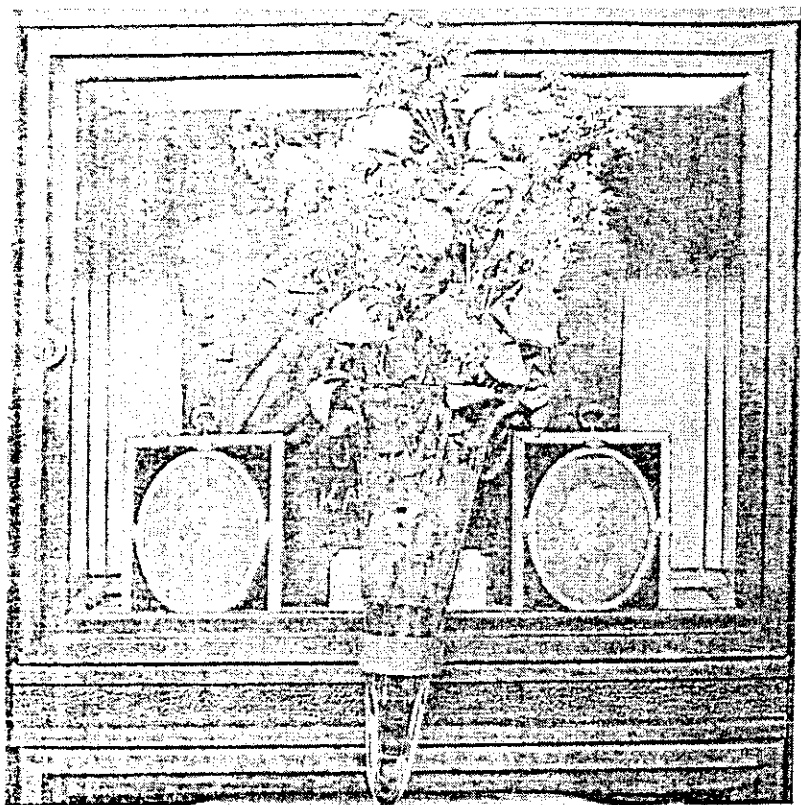


Figure 13h. A niche in the west columbarium in the Crematory Building

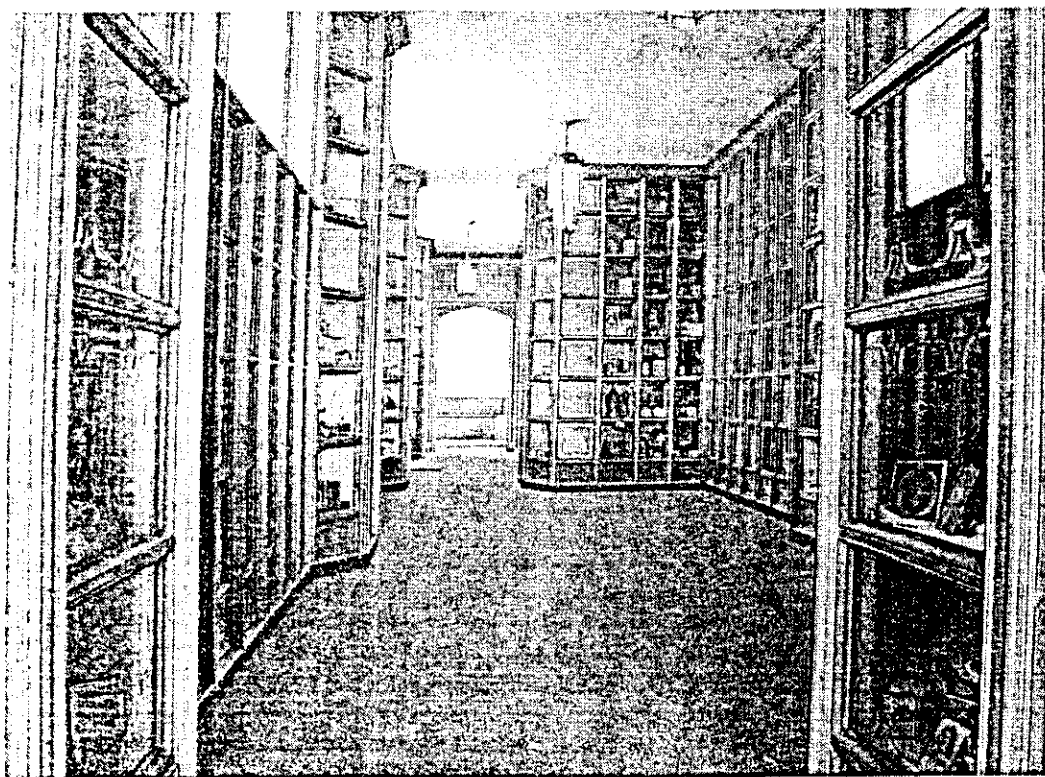


Figure 13i. The east columbarium in the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

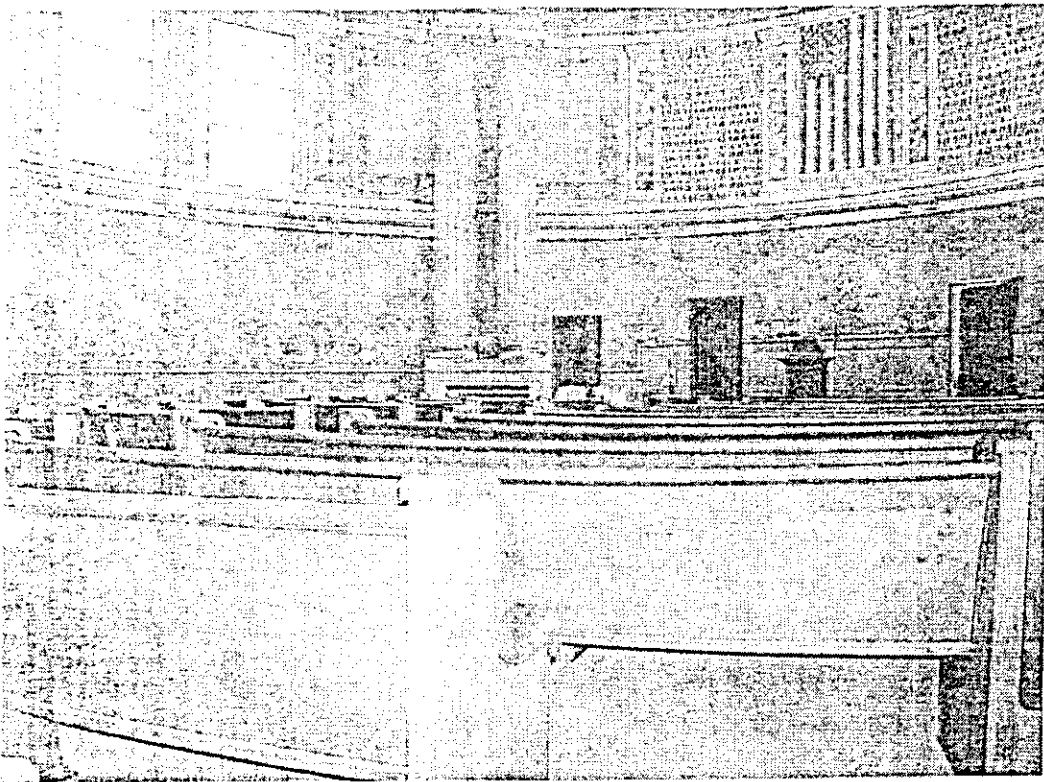


Figure 13j. The upper chapel in the Crematory Building

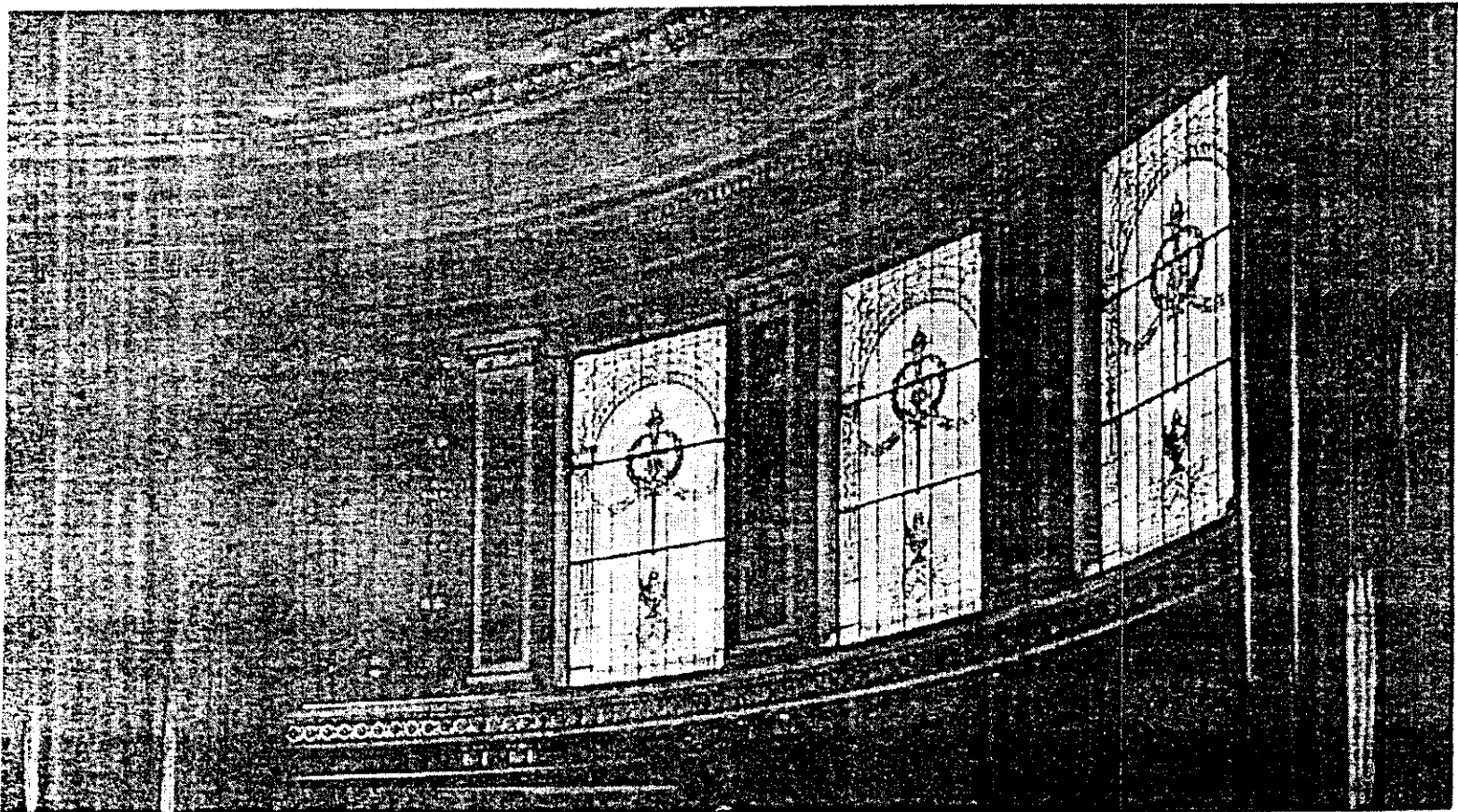


Figure 13k. The clerestory windows in upper chapel in the Crematory Building

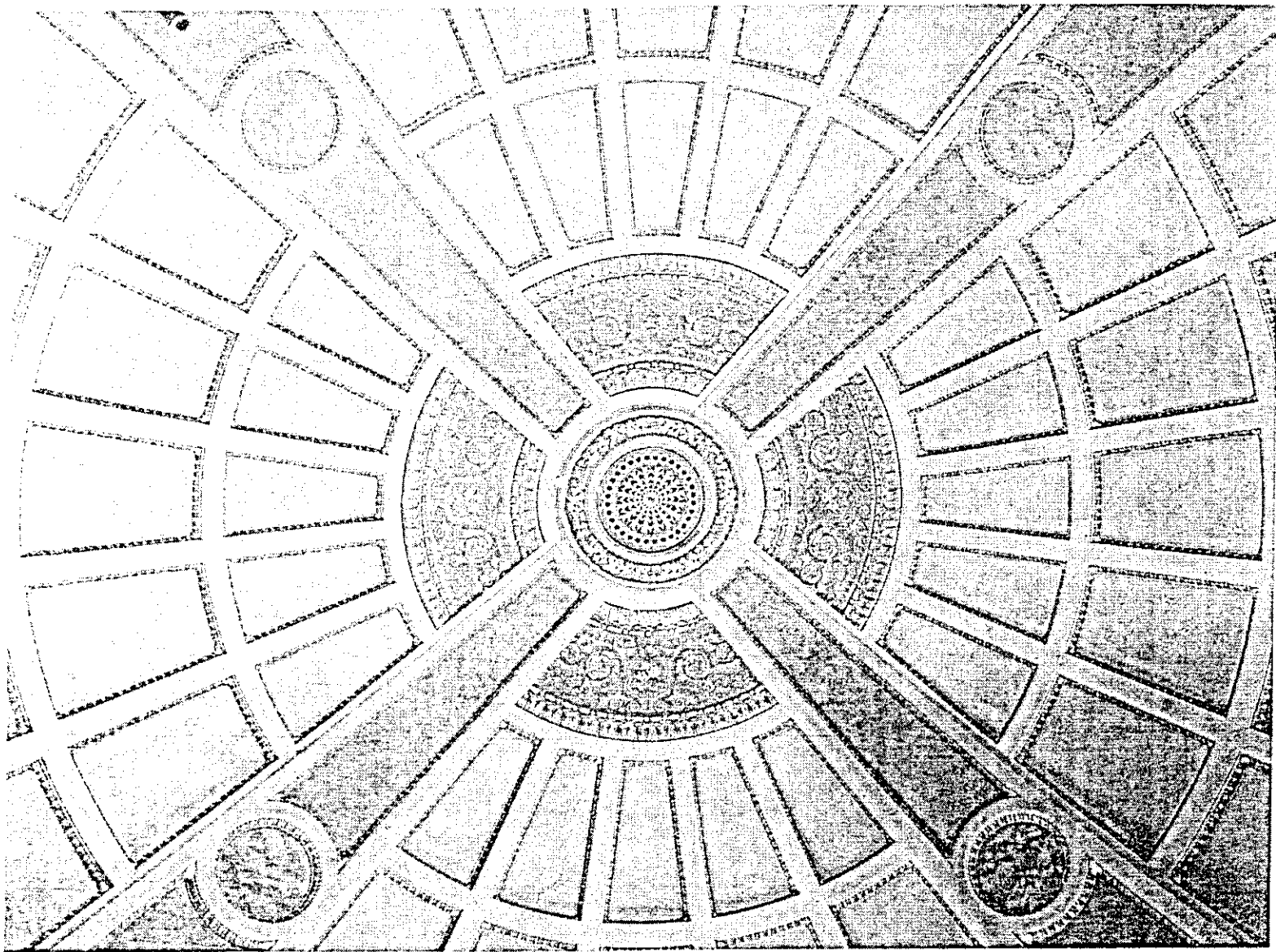


Figure 131. The dome over the upper chapel in the Crematory Building

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

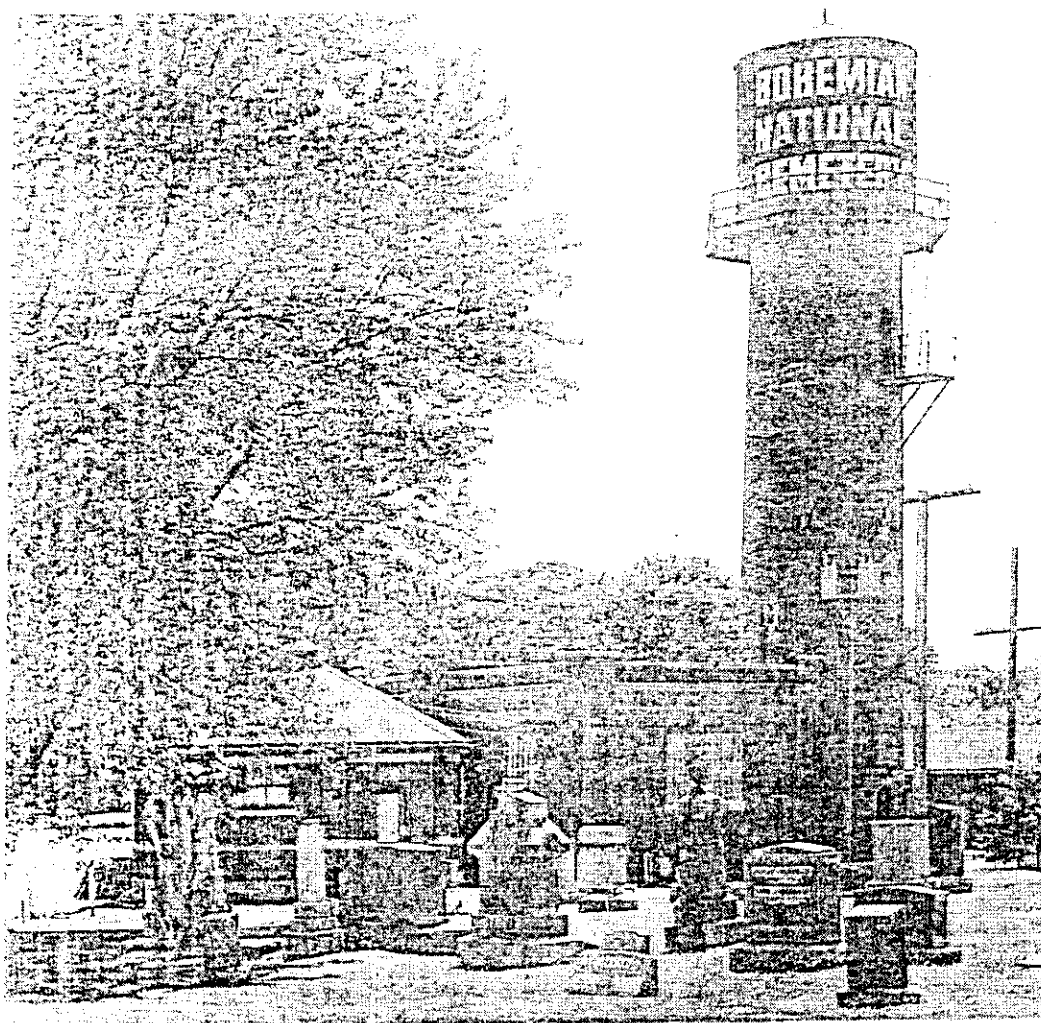


Figure 14. The Water Tower, Pump House, and Locker and Lunch Room, all 1950

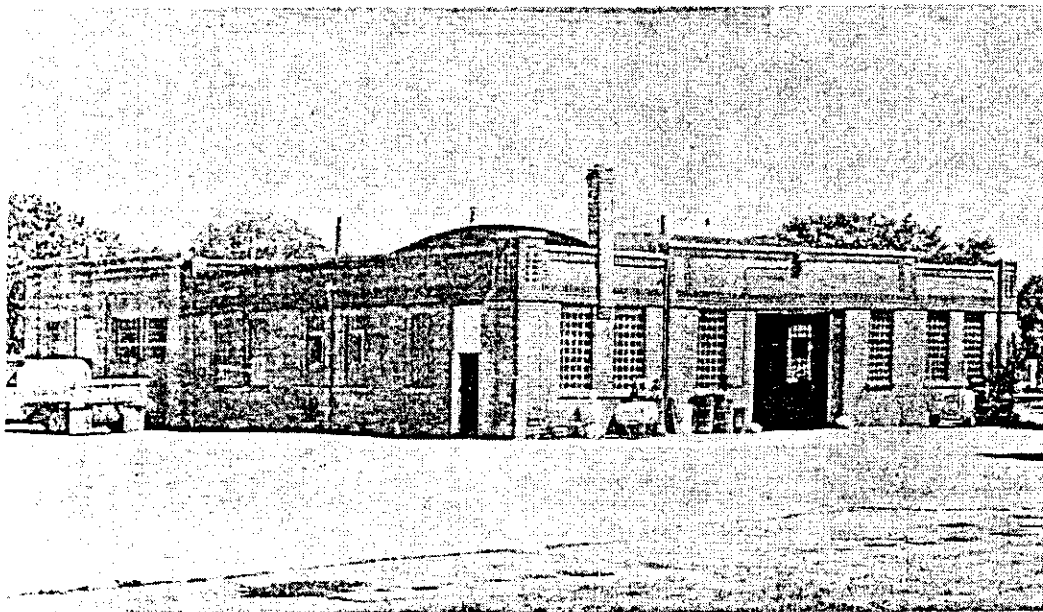


Figure 15. The Garage and Repair Shop, after 1936

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

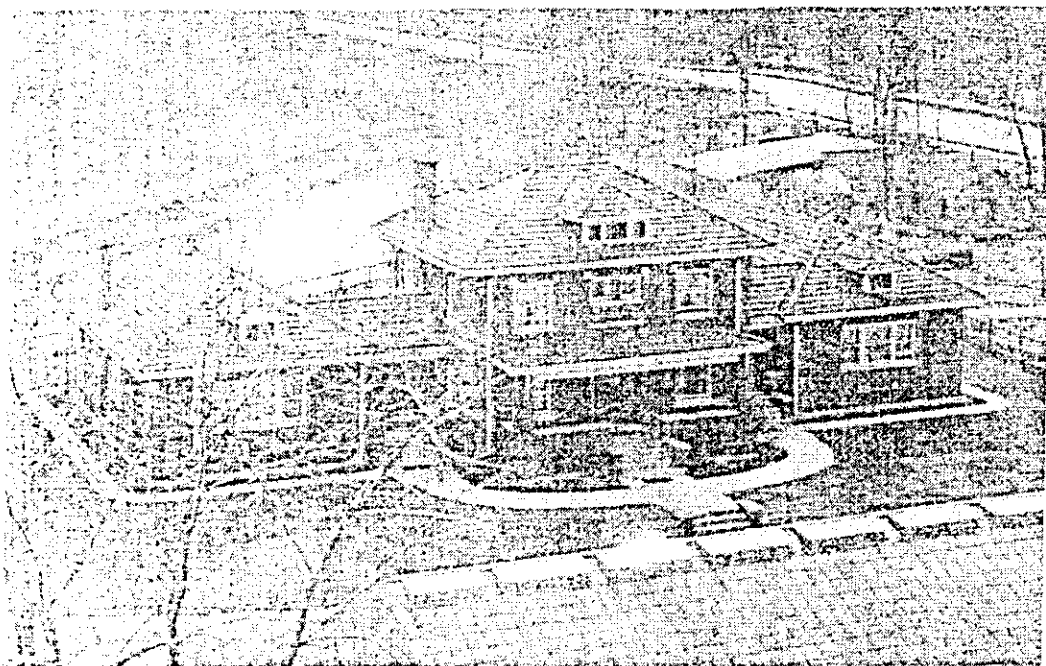


Figure 16. Historical photograph of the Duplex Residence, 1925

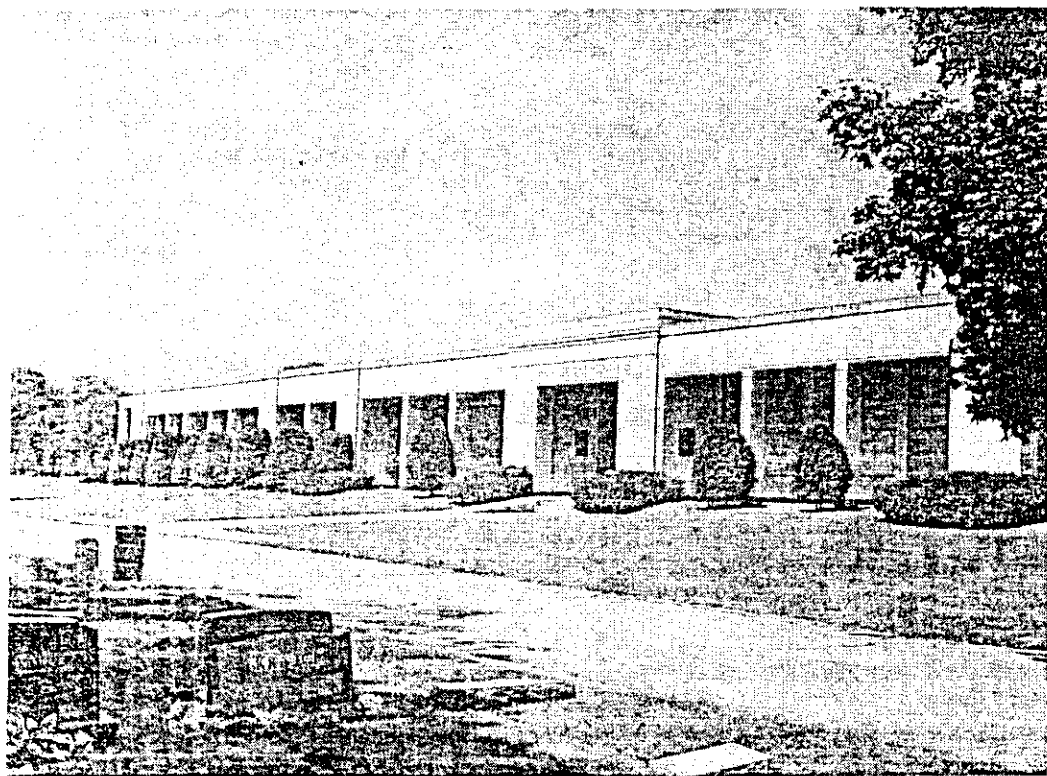


Figure 17. The Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum, 1959

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

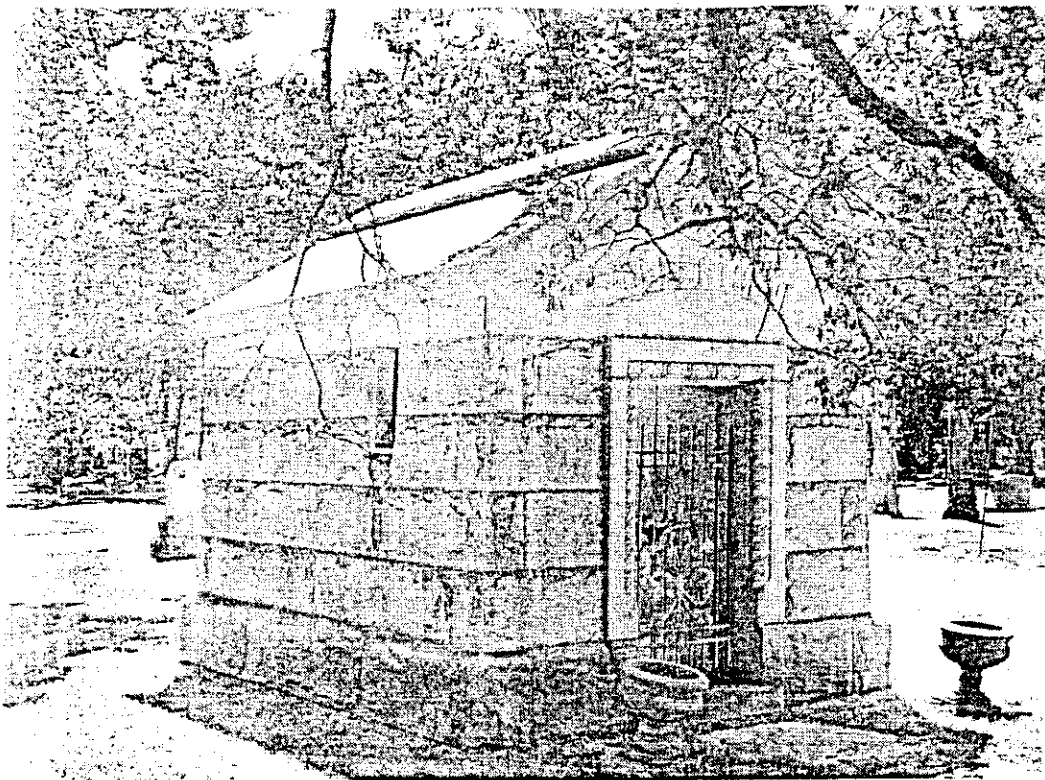


Figure 18. The Vollerston Mausoleum, 1883

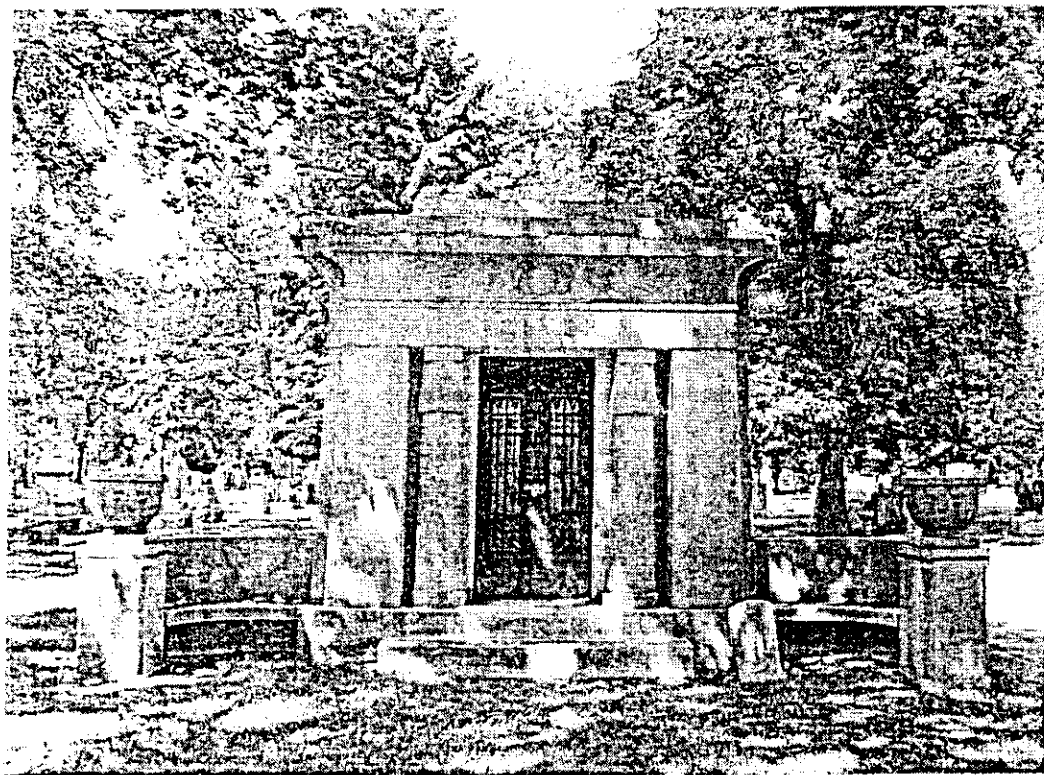


Figure 19. The Triner Mausoleum, 1904

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

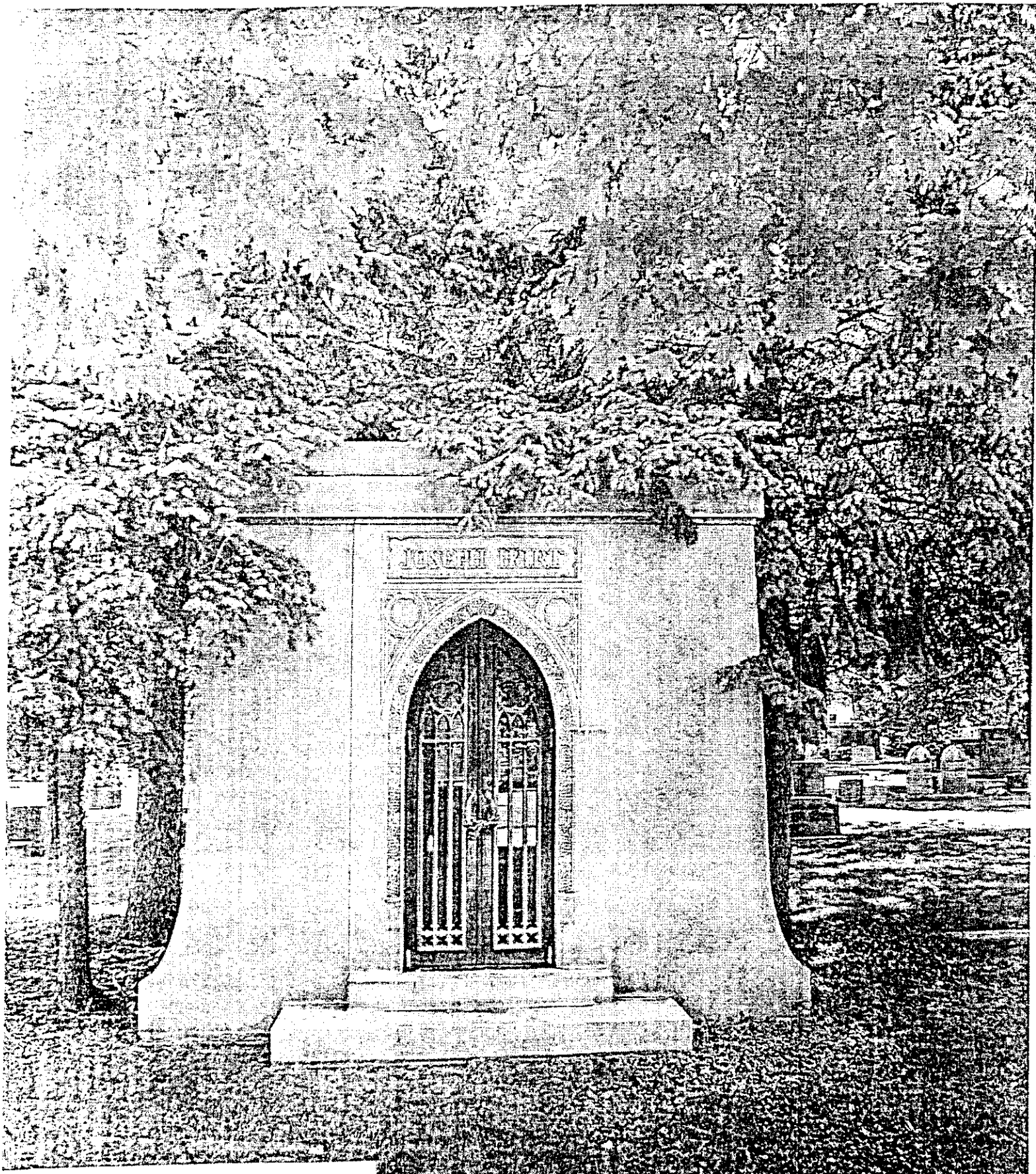


Figure 20. The Hurt Mausoleum, 1943

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

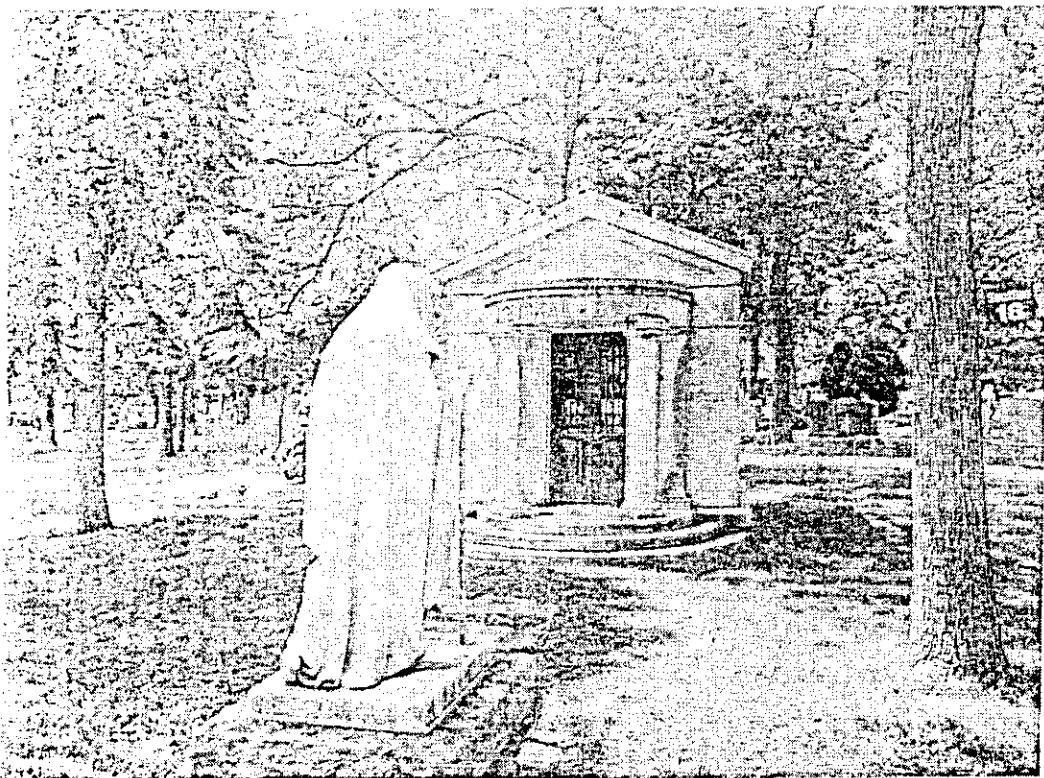


Figure 21. The Stejskal-Buchal Mausoleum, 1928



Figure 22. *The Pilgrim*, by Albin Polasek, 1928

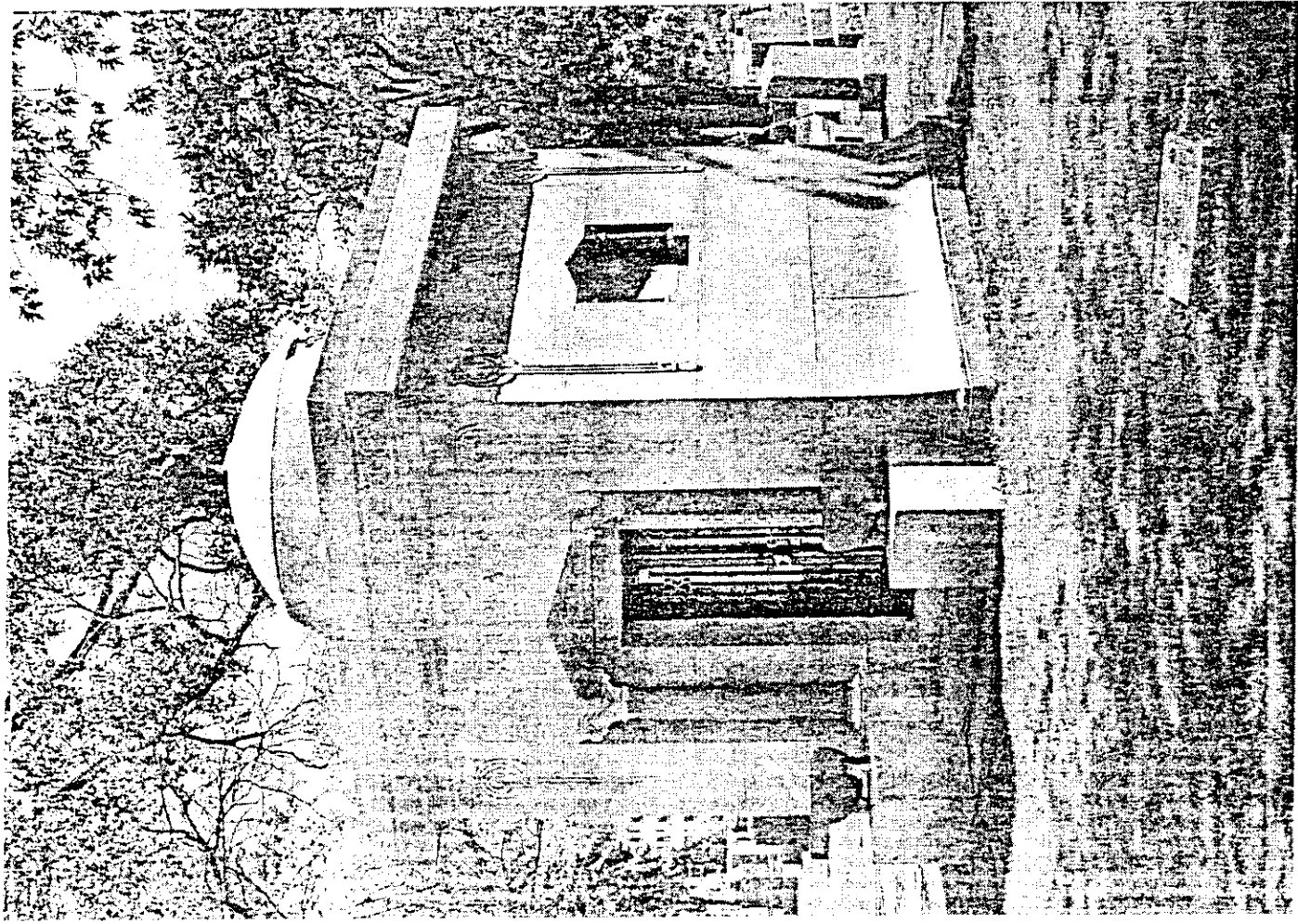


Figure 23. The Krupka Mausoleum, 1910

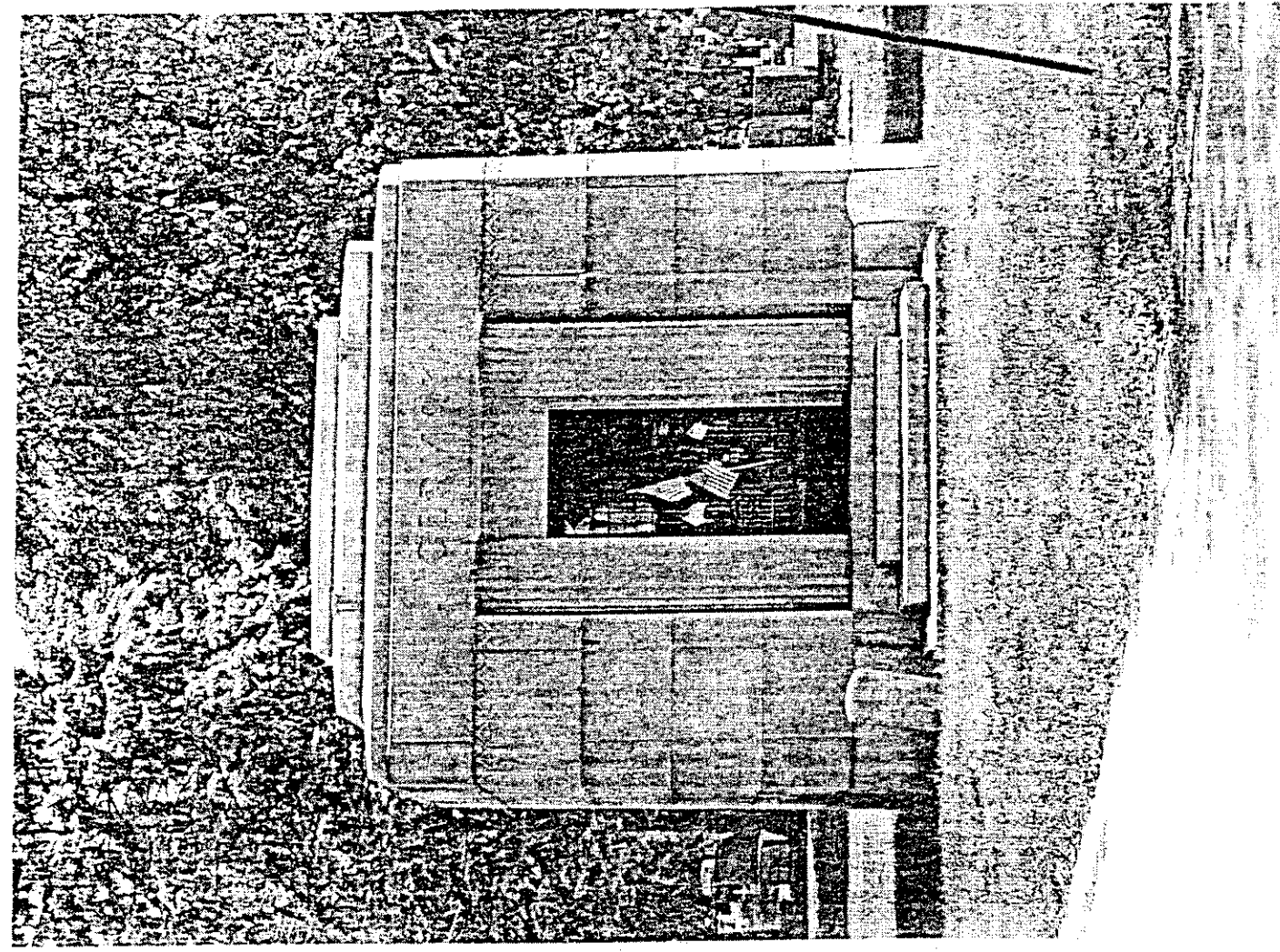


Figure 24. The Cermak Mausoleum, 1928

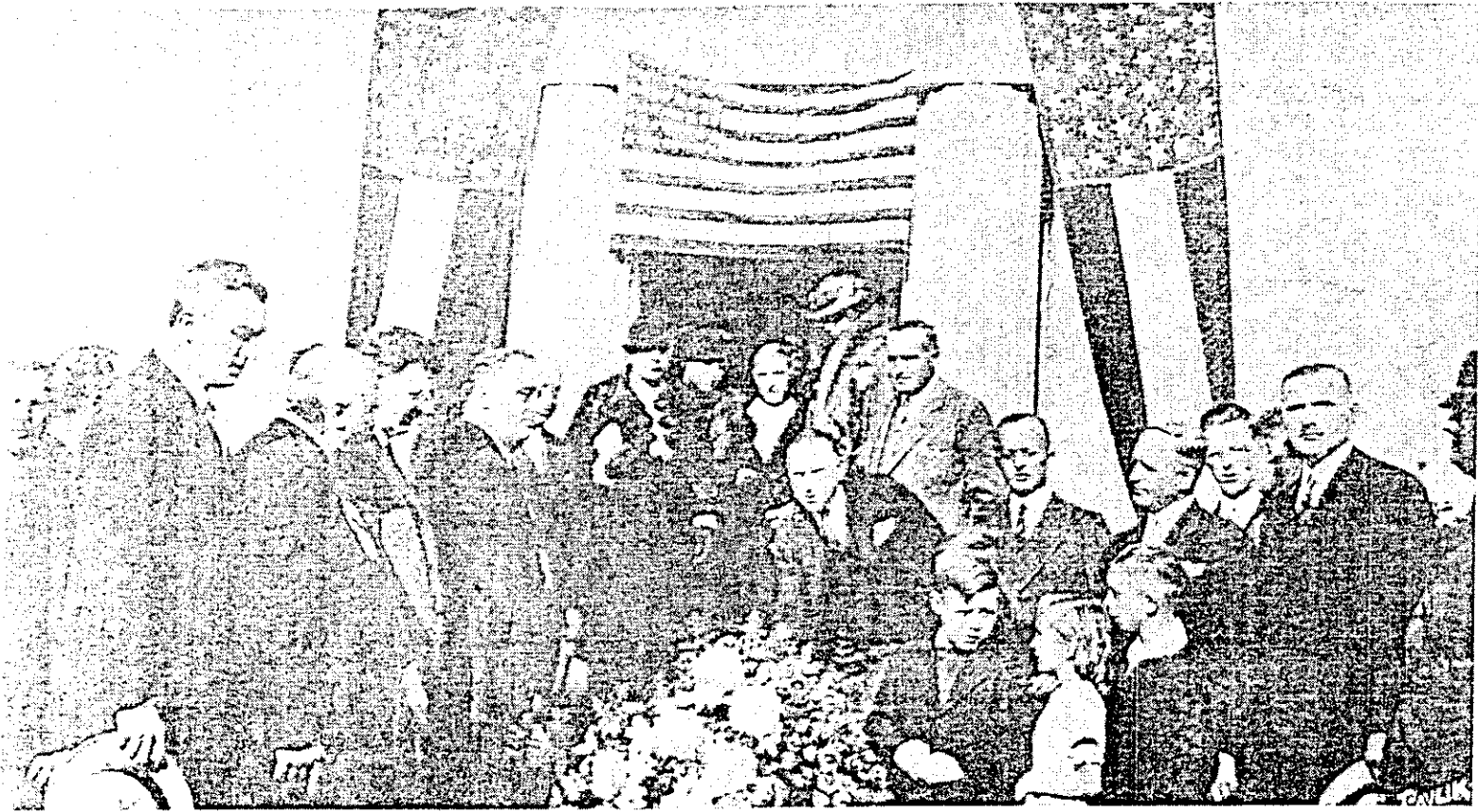


Figure 25. Historical photograph of Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the Cermak Mausoleum, 1933

Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

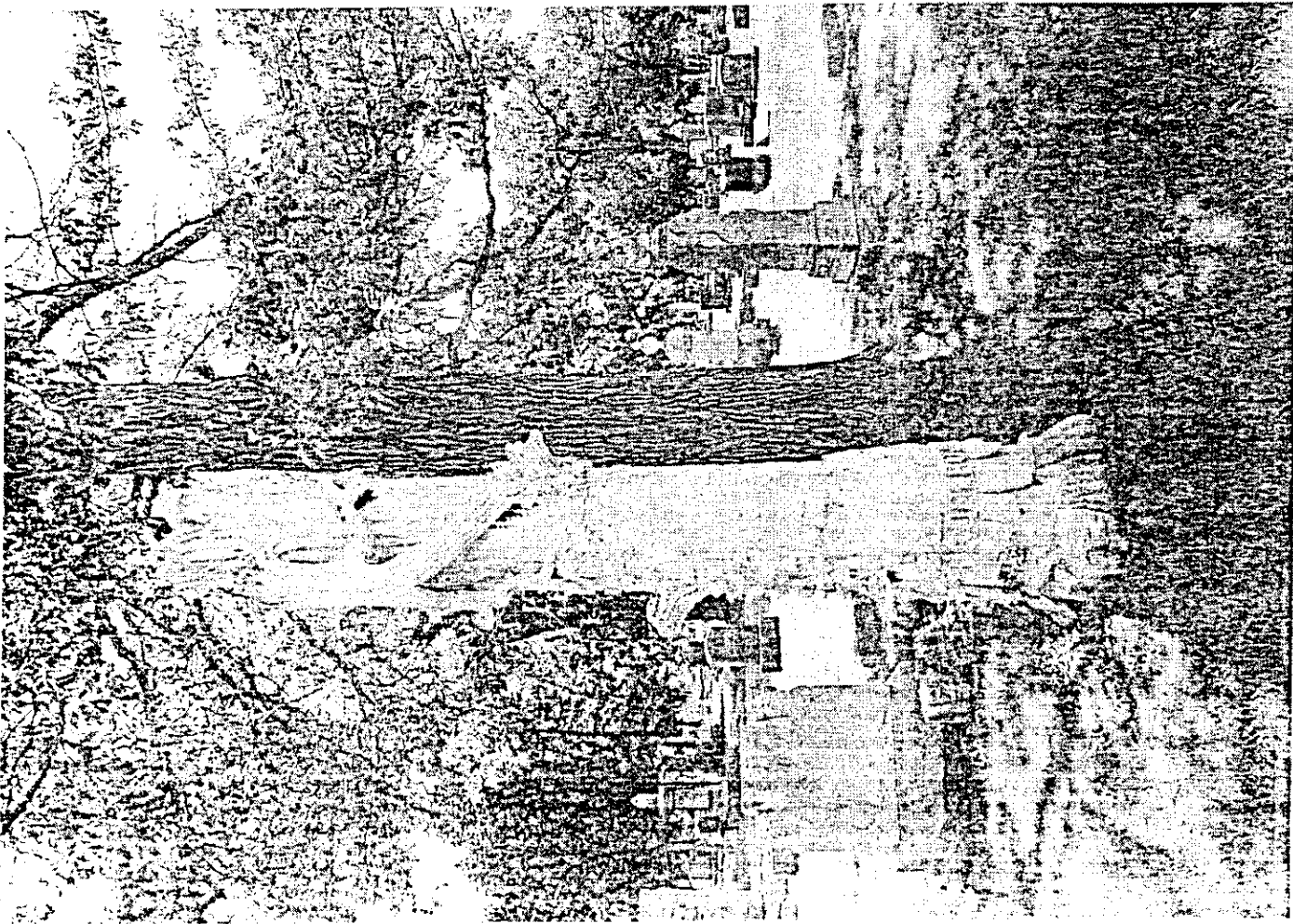


Figure 26. The Kučera Family Marker, 1892
 Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

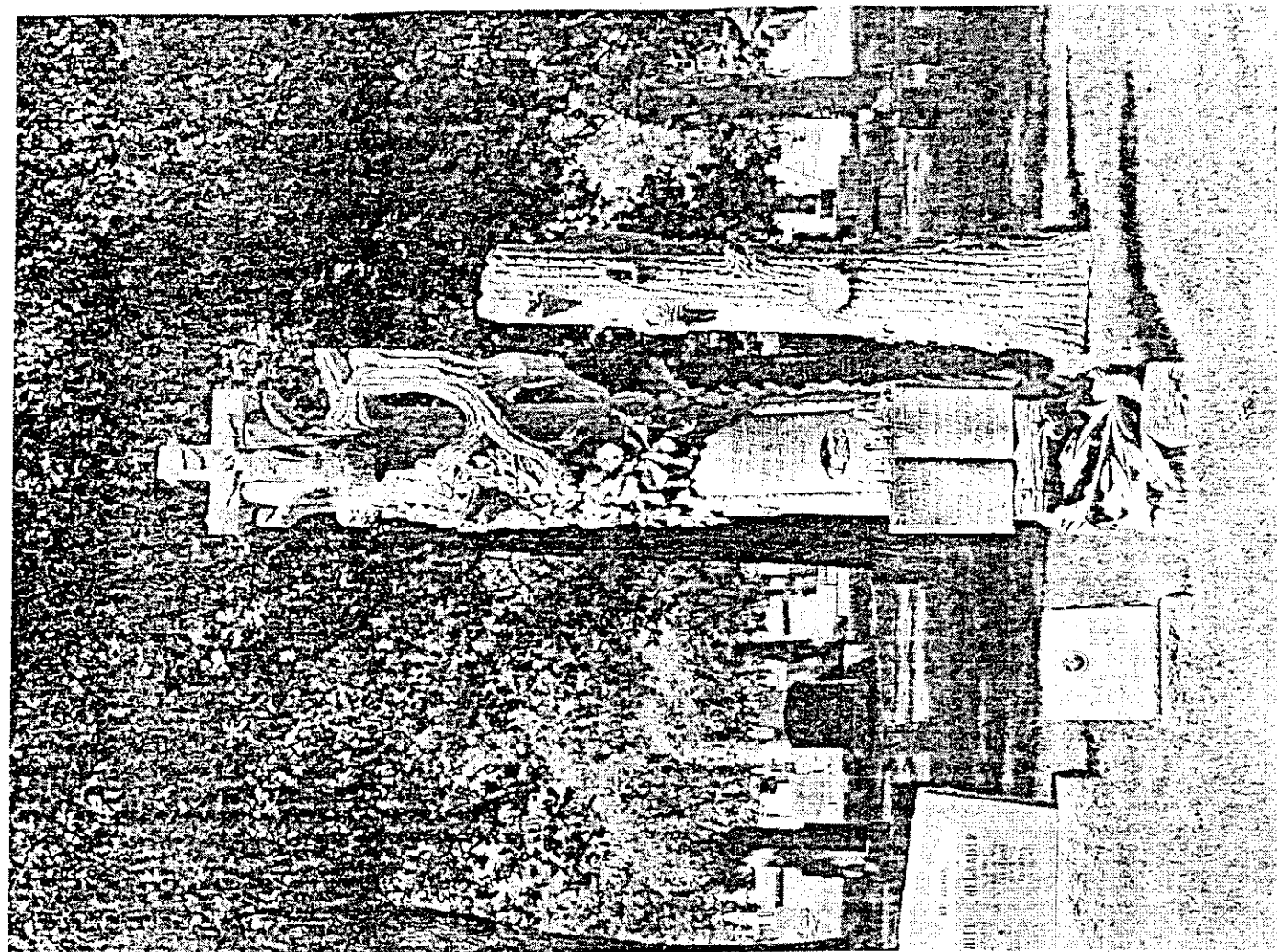


Figure 28. The Jameek Family Marker, 1919

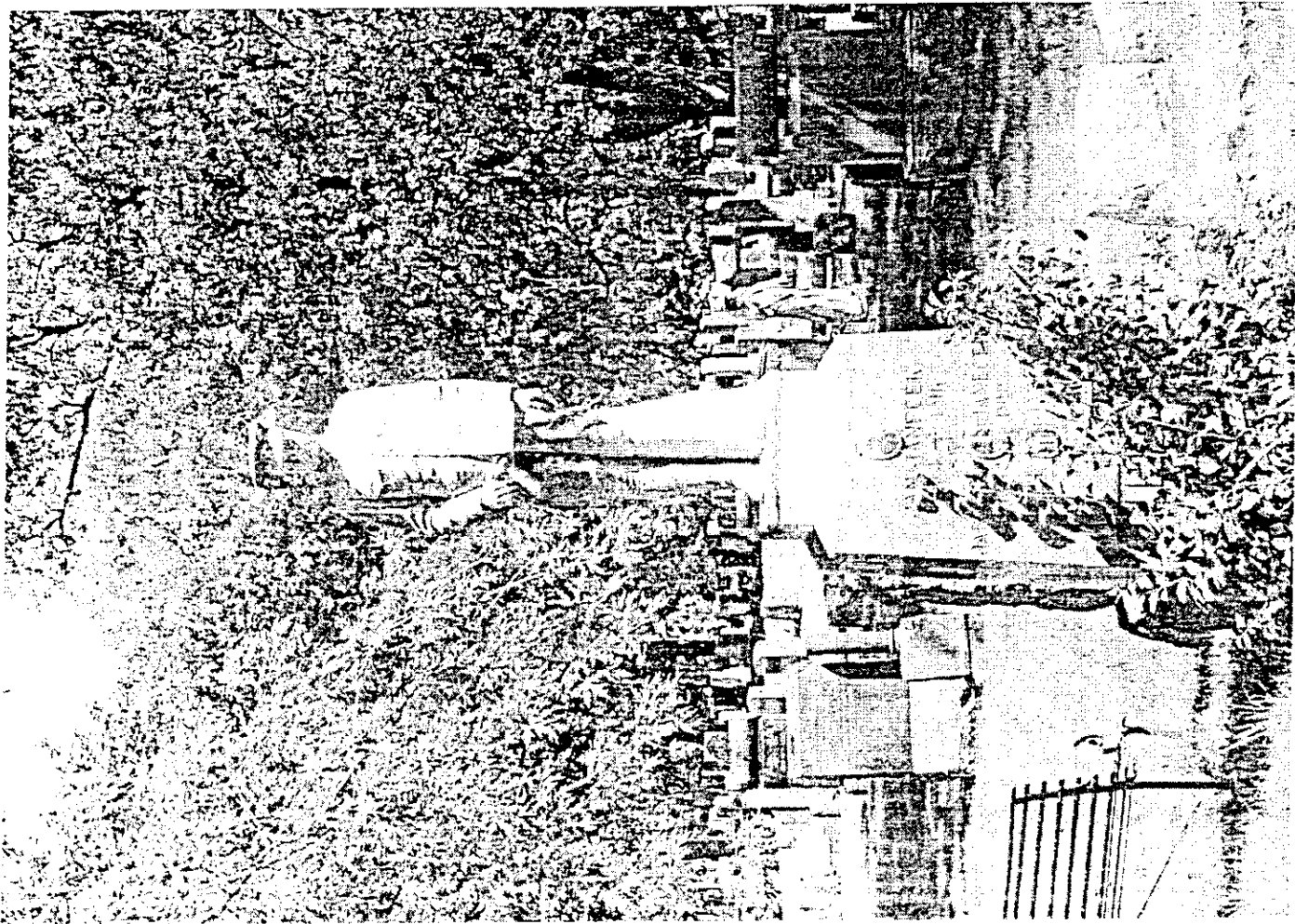


Figure 27. The Broznik Family Marker, 1896

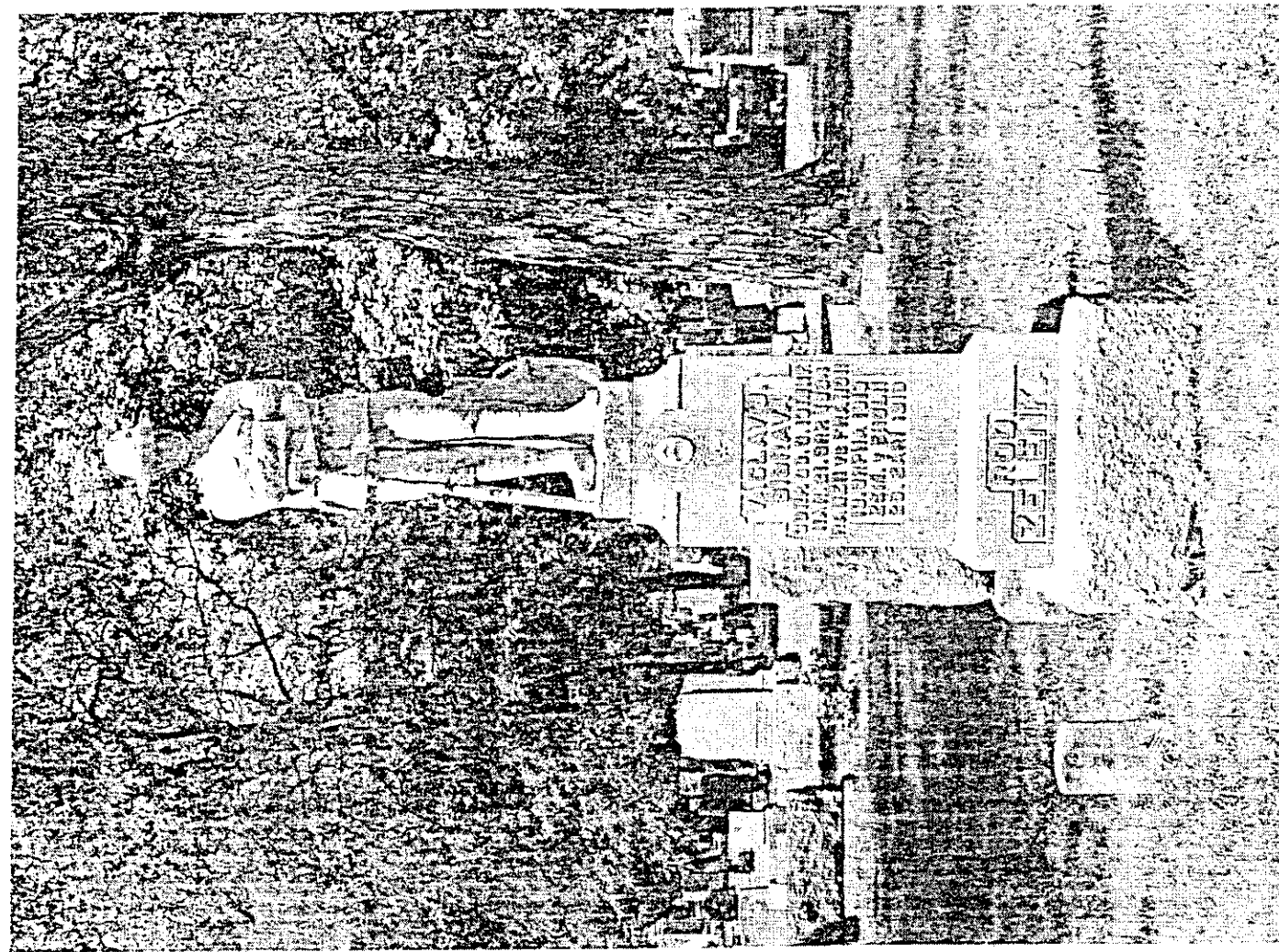


Figure 29. The Zelenka Family Marker, 1918

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USGS Chicago, Illinois, United States 10 Apr 2002



Image courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

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Bohemian National Cemetery, Cook County, Illinois

<http://terraServer.microsoft.com/PrintImage.aspx?T=4&S=11&Z=16&X=1100&Y=11618...> 3/28/2006



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning
and Development

Lori T. Healey
Commissioner

Suite 1600
33 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602
(312) 744-3200
(312) 744-9140 (FAX)
(312) 744-2578 (TTY)

<http://www.cityofchicago.org>

March 2, 2006

Tracey A. Sculle
Survey & National Register Coordinator
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
1 Old State Capitol
Springfield, IL 62702

Re: **Chicago nominations to the National Register of Historic Places
for**

- **Lou Mitchell's Restaurant, 565 W. Jackson Blvd.**
- **Union Park Congregational Church and Carpenter Chapel,
(Now First Baptist Congregational Church), 1613 W.
Washington Blvd.**
- **Bohemian National Cemetery, Bounded by Foster Ave.,
Pulaski Rd., Bryn Mawr Ave., and Central Park Ave.**
- **Lake Shore Drive West Historic District, 303 W. Barry
Ave., 325, 330-342 W. Wellington Ave., and 340 W.
Oakdale Ave.**
- **Krause Music Store, 4611 N. Lincoln Ave.**

Dear Ms. Sculle:

This is in response to your letters of February 17, 2006, to Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Commission on Chicago Landmarks asking for the Commission's comments on the nominations of the properties referenced above to the National Register of Historic Places. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Chicago is given the opportunity to comment on local nominations to the National Register prior to being considered by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council.

At its regular meeting of March 2, 2006, the Commission voted unanimously to support the National Register listings for all five nominations. The Commission's resolution is attached.

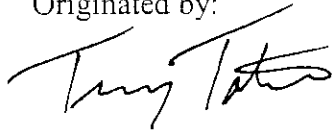
Please contact Terry Tatum of my staff at 312-744-9147 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Goeken
Deputy Commissioner
Landmarks Division



Originated by:



Terry Tatum
Director of Research
Landmarks Division

encl.

cc: Alderman Madeline L. Haithcock, 2nd Ward
Alderman Margaret Laurino, 39th Ward
Alderman Thomas Tunney, 44th Ward
Alderman Eugene C. Schuler, 47th Ward
Philip Thomason
Teresa Douglass
Kathryn K. Thanas
William B. Sieger, Northeastern Illinois University
Bohemian National Cemetery Association
Diane Kallenback, 39th Ward Office
Peter and Pooja Vukosavich
Linda Peters, PhD
Kathy Caisley, DPD
Terri Haymaker, DPD
Mary Bonome, DPD
Danita Childers, DPD
Don Hohenadel, DPD
Val Zillig, DPD

Resolution
by the
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
on the
Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places
for the

Lou Mitchell's Restaurant, 565 W. Jackson Blvd.

**Union Park Congregational Church and Carpenter Chapel,
(Now First Baptist Congregational Church), 1613 W. Washington Blvd.**

**Bohemian National Cemetery,
Bounded by Foster Ave., Pulaski Rd., Bryn Mawr Ave., and Central Park Ave.**

**Lake Shore Drive West Historic District,
303 W. Barry Ave., 325, 330-342 W. Wellington Ave., and 340 W. Oakdale Ave.**

Krause Music Store, 4611 N. Lincoln Ave.

December 1, 2005

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks finds that:

- the Lou Mitchell's Restaurant building, built in 1949, meets Criterion A for commerce and transportation for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, a federal initiative to document properties associated with Route 66. The period of significance is from 1949, when the restaurant was constructed, to 1956, the fifty-year cut off for significance to the National Register; and
- the Union Park Congregation Church and Carpenter Chapel, now the First Baptist Congregational Church, meets Criterion C for architecture, and its period of significance is from 1869, when the chapel was completed, to 1871, when the church building was built. It also meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious property that derives its primary significance from architecture; and
- Bohemian National Cemetery meets Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage and Criterion C for Architecture, Art and Landscape Architecture for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The period of significance is 1877, when the cemetery was first developed, to 1956, the fifty-year cut off for significance to the National Register; and

- the Lake Shore Drive West Historic District, located on the eastern edge of the Lake View neighborhood, meets Criterion C for architecture, and its period of significance is 1913, when the first house was built, to 1930, the date of the district's last house; and
- the Krause Music Store, a two-story commercial building located in the Lincoln Square neighborhood, is the last work of architect Louis Sullivan and is an excellent example of his work. The building meets Criterion C for architecture, and its period of significance is 1922, the year of its construction.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that it hereby supports the listing of all five nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.



Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

1 Old State Capitol Plaza • Springfield, Illinois 62701-1512 • Teletypewriter Only (217) 524-7128

Voice (217) 782-4836

www.illinois-history.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Richard M. Daley, City of Chicago
Brian Goeken, Landmarks Division, Department of Planning and Development

FROM: Tracey A. Sculle, Survey and National Register Coordinator *TAS*

DATE: December 27, 2005

SUBJECT: Preliminary Opinion for the Bohemian National Cemetery

The Bohemian National Cemetery meets Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage and Criterion C for Architecture, Art and Landscape Architecture for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The District is locally significant as an ethnic cemetery developed by Bohemians. The period of significance for the cemetery is from 1877, when the cemetery was first developed, to 1956, the fifty-year cutoff for significance to the National Register. The Cemetery also meets Criteria Consideration D because it derives its primary significance from its association with the Bohemian American community in Chicago and because of its distinctive design features and architecture.

The founding of the Bohemian National Cemetery in 1877 established a trend throughout Bohemian communities in the United States resulting in the formation of other ethnic cemeteries in Baltimore, Maryland; Omaha, Nebraska; Cedar Rapids, Iowa and in Chippewa County, Wisconsin. The initial 50 acre cemetery was designed by John V. Benes, a local building contractor and cemetery association delegate, who laid out the cemetery in a plan similar to the larger grid-plan of the Chicago area. In 1902, the purchase of an additional 60 acres resulted in an expansion of the cemetery plan designed by August Petryl, a classically trained artist and illustrator who owned a decorating firm in Chicago. Petryl's plan featured curvilinear roads and organically shaped lots, while continuing the east/west road system of the original plan into the new area. In 1905, the association commissioned Jens Jensen to prepare plans for additional acreage to the north. Incorporated into the evolving plan of the cemetery are a Late Gothic Revival Main Gatehouse, a Classical Revival Administration Building, a Renaissance Revival Crematorium and secondary support structures, along with numerous mausoleums, public monuments and grave markers representing a variety of architectural styles.

The Bohemian National Cemetery brings together a remarkable blend of historical circumstances, immigrant American pride, and important art, architecture, and landscape design. The Bohemian National Cemetery has excellent integrity and clearly conveys both its historical and architectural importance and will make an excellent addition to the National Register of Historic Places.

RAHM EMANUEL
5TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1305

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1319 LONGWORTH
HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
202-225-4061

CHICAGO OFFICE:
3742 WEST IRVING PARK ROAD
CHICAGO, IL 60618
773-267-5926

March 3, 2006

Ms. Tracey Sculle
National Register Coordinator
Preservation Services Division
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Old State Capitol
Springfield, IL 62701

Dear Ms. Sculle:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to you in support of the National Register nomination for the Bohemian National Cemetery, located in the 5th Congressional District.

The Bohemian National Cemetery provides a link to Chicago's past, and continues to promote the identity and culture of Chicago's Czech-American community. The cemetery is the burial site for many of Chicago's most famous Czech-Americans including Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak. Recognizing the Bohemian National Cemetery on the National Registry would not only recognize the cemetery, but also the role that these Chicagoans have played in making Chicago the world-class city that it is.

Similarly, the cemetery has numerous memorials and monuments on its grounds that signify Chicago's participation in American history like the Civil War and World Wars I and II. I have attended events at the Cemetery and am consistently impressed with how Czech culture and the history of Chicago's north side is fostered and supported by this institution.

This historical designation is a critical step in acknowledging the city of Chicago, its citizens and its history. I urge you to join me in support of this nomination for historical designation. If you need any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my District Director John Borovicka at 773-267-5926.

Sincerely,



Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress

CC: Bohemian National Cemetery
Chicago Alderman Margaret Laurino, 39th Ward

RE/jlb

DISTRICT OFFICE:
4404 W. LAWRENCE AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60630
TELEPHONE: 773/736-0218
FAX: 773/736-2333

CAPITOL OFFICE:
284-S STRATTON BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706
TELEPHONE: 217/782-8198
FAX: 217/782-2906

e-mail: johnd@ilga.gov



JOHN D'AMICO
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
15TH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES:
AGING
APPROPRIATIONS - PUBLIC SAFETY
ELECTIONS & CAMPAIGN REFORM
ELECTRIC UTILITY OVERSIGHT
LABOR
TRANSPORTATION & MOTOR VEHICLES

March 30, 2005

Ms. Tracey A. Sculle
National Register Coordinator
Preservation Services Division
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Old State Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Dear Ms. Sculle:

It is my pleasure to write this letter to support the proposal of the Bohemian National Cemetery to be designated a landmark.

The Bohemian National Cemetery is a historical place in our neighborhood and holds much value. It is where people have laid their loved ones to rest for over one hundred years. The Bohemian National Cemetery also honors veterans each day, reminding the community of the service these men and women have provided. The Cemetery not only provides a place of peace for the deceased and strong historical significance, but also an aesthetically pleasing place for community members to enjoy.

Your consideration of this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John C. D'Amico".

John C. D'Amico
State Representative, 15th District

Cc: Judy Baar Topinka, Illinois State Treasurer

ARKANSAS, JEFFERSON COUNTY,
Boone-Murphy House,
714 W. 4th Ave.,
Pine Bluff, 79000442,
PROPOSED MOVE APPROVED, 5/03/06

FLORIDA, GADSDEN COUNTY,
Dezell House,
328 E. 8th St.,
Greensboro, 06000358,
LISTED, 5/10/06

* ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Bohemian National Cemetery,
Roughly bounded by Foster Ave., Pulaski Rd., Bryn Mawr Ave., and the approx.
line of Central Park Ave.,
Chicago, 06000374,
LISTED, 5/11/06

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Meekerville Historic District,
303 Barry Ave., 325,303-341,344 Wellington Ave., 340 Oakdale Ave.,
Chicago, 06000383,
LISTED, 5/12/06

ILLINOIS, LAKE COUNTY,
Hibbard, Frank, Estate House--Deerpath Hill Estates,
301 N. Chiltern Dr.,
Lake Forest, 06000379,
LISTED, 5/12/06
(Deerpath Hill Estates:an English Garden Development in Lake Forest, Illinois
MPS)

ILLINOIS, LAKE COUNTY,
House at 380 Chiltern Drive--Deerpath Hill Estates,
380 Chiltern Dr.,
Lake Forest, 06000378,
LISTED, 5/12/06
(Deerpath Hill Estates:an English Garden Development in Lake Forest, Illinois
MPS)

ILLINOIS, LAKE COUNTY,
House at 965 Castlegate Court--Deerpath Hill Estates,
965 Castlegate Court,
Lake Forest, 06000382,
LISTED, 5/12/06
(Deerpath Hill Estates:an English Garden Development in Lake Forest, Illinois
MPS)

IOWA, HARRISON COUNTY,
Harrison County Jail,
105 S. 1st Ave.,
Logan, 83004517,
REMOVED, 5/10/06